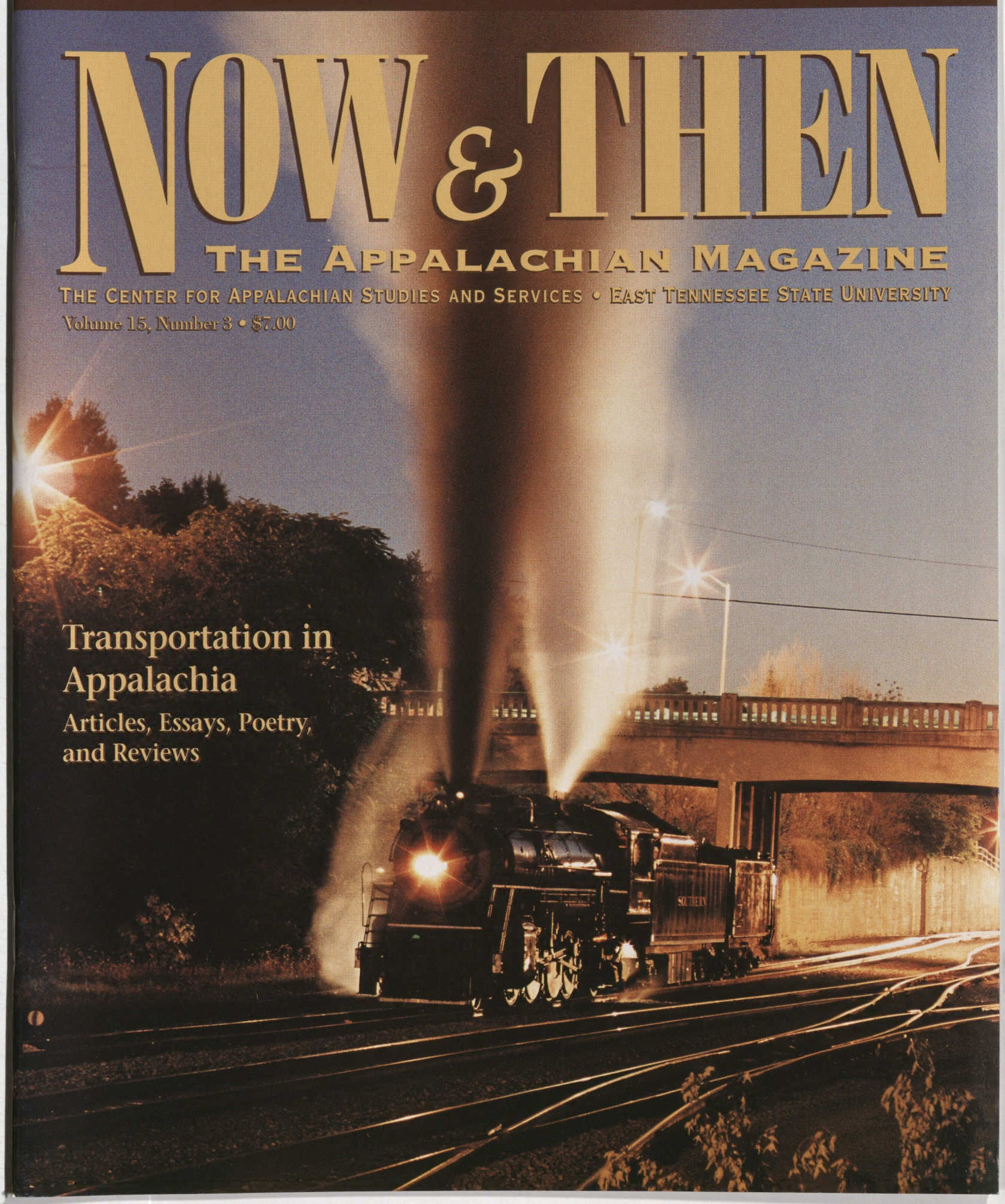
Virginia's Smart Road • An Appalachian Aviation Pioneer • Wagon Trains

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES • EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
Volume 15, Number 3 • $7.00



Transportation in Appalachia

Articles, Essays, Poetry, and Reviews

Transportation in Appalachia

feet first
soft
on the forest floor
following creek beds
and the trails of animals
horseback
saddlebag and rifle
deeds and surveyors' maps
making way
for the wagons
ass- and axle-deep in mud
timber rafts
red oak
and poplar
men rode down the river
and walking three days back
enough in their pockets
for school shoes
and taxes
railroads
bringing nothing
but a lonesome whistle
rail cars
clattering in empty
leaving heaped dark
with the insides of mountains
what went out
by the trainload
what came in
on the backs of peddlers
in the tight black bags
of missionaries
cars pulling out
hands waving bye
heading for the city
to build more cars
leaving the homeplace
to sink and fall
a mound of sawbriar
and honeysuckle
chimney like a headstone
marking the grave

troop trains
warships and aircraft carriers
transporting sons
for soldiers
some come back
to get their things
some to the graveyard
some not
at all
some to sit
staring from the porch
ghost-battles
in the garden
everything
rolls away
pumpkins
in a slope-y patch
folks carried off
like milk jugs at flood tide
like good black dirt
down the holler after rain
out
down
away and
gone

—Anne Shelby

Anne Shelby, who lives in Clay County, Ky., has published poems in Appalachian Journal, Appalachian Heritage, Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel, *and other journals. Her work has also appeared in the anthologies,* Old Wounds, New Words *and* A Gathering at the Forks. *"Transportation in Appalachia" is from a chapbook, "Lines from Home," which is looking for a publisher.*

Cover photograph (and winner of an honorable mention in the 1997 Fresh Look at Appalachia Photography Competition): "Current History" by DeWayne Hall of Bristol, Va. Cover layout by Hillhouse Graphic Design, Kingsport, Tenn.

Winter 1998
Volume 15, Number 3

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

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Now & Then has been published three times a year since 1984 by the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University. The Center is one of the State of Tennessee's Centers of Excellence supporting artistic, scholarly, and public service projects in the region. For membership information see *NewsCASS*, inserted in this magazine.

Submissions of poetry, fiction, articles, personal essays, graphics, and photographs concerned with Appalachian life, past and present, are welcomed if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Upcoming deadlines: Lives — March 1, 1999 (for Summer 1999); Health Care — July 1, 1999 (for Winter 1999). **Address correspondence to:** ***Now & Then,*** Box 70556, ETSU, Johnson City TN 37614, or e-mail: woodsidj@etsu.edu. **Send Poetry to:** Linda Parsons, 2909 Fountain Park Blvd., Knoxville TN 37917. **Send book reviews or suggestions for reviews to:** Sandy Ballard, English Dept., Carson-Newman College, Box 2059, Jefferson City TN 37760. ***Now & Then*** guidelines are available on the World Wide Web at: http://cass.etsu.edu/n&t/guidelin.htm.

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TBR No. 260-091-98 4.5M
ISSN No. 0896-2693

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Printed by Inové Graphics, Kingsport, Tenn.

"Trains have always had a sort of individual magic.
Perhaps it's something wrapped up in a memory.
Maybe a day someone came or went.
A place. A year. A war."

—Edward J. Myers

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Magical Mystery Tours in the Mountains

This particular theme, Transportation in Appalachia, attracted the strongest batch of submissions I've seen since becoming editor of *Now & Then* nearly four years ago. It was, I must admit, something of a surprise.

Maybe this is a subject that really resonates with people who have lived in Appalachia. Perhaps traveling through the mountains is so memorable because, as essayist Dot Jackson reminds us, it has been — more often than not — so taxing. "It is hard to imagine, in these days of fax and e-mail, how difficult it was to get in touch with people outside our own cove," she writes in "Going to Davenports'" (p. 3), her wry, bemused memoir of a 1941 family expedition. When you look at that rumpled terrain from the air, as Richard Hague does in his poem, "Flying Back from Birmingham" (p. 12), it's easy to imagine how East Tennessee native Edward Huffaker of "The Forgotten Pioneer" (p. 6) was inspired to look for ways to soar over the steep hillsides he had hacked his way through as a surveyor.

Then there's the fact that you can virtually trace the region's history by tracking advances in transportation, as poet Anne Shelby does in "Transportation in Appalachia" (inside front cover). From Native American trails to interstates, from O. Winston Link's much loved steam railroads (p.13) to Smart Roads (p. 25), whenever a new transportation technology appears, Appalachia can brace itself for growth and upheaval.

But what was most striking was how many of the writers didn't confine themselves to talking about the movement of people and goods from point A to point B in a particular place. Instead, they opted to explore transportation's potential to perform magic.

To be able to travel is to be able to move — in the ever-widening circles of Huffaker's glider or of the fictional character Lloyd Spoon's Cadillac — away from your own time, place, and circumstances. You can travel back in time, back to the "countryside of memory" to revisit those rambling days of your own youth, as essayist Fred Waage does in "Ithaca" (p. 30). You can escape the present, a world "full of folks scrambling at a manic pace, looking in their rear view mirrors at hundreds of others in just as big a hurry to sit stalled in traffic," as journalist Michael Barrick advises you to do in "The Hillbilly Highway" (p. 21). Instead, you can amble along Barrick's "Hillbilly Highway" or roll along in a line of wagon trains. On a wagon train, writes folklorist Tess Lloyd in her article entitled "In Your Blood" (p. 33), you can take the time to "see and identify and savor each wildflower as you pass."

Or you can be two little old people cruising down the road in a very large '53 Cadillac convertible, the wind blowing through your gray hair as you experience one last burst of romance in your long and enduring marriage. Along the way, you discover that you're not quite as set in your ways as you might have thought. "The car was like a giant pebble dropped into the vast unstirred pools of their imaginations," observes Lloyd and Vida's creator, writer Rebecca Phillips, in "Cadillac Summer" (p. 17), "making all sorts of new things possible. Maybe more than possible, maybe necessary."

Journeying beyond the familiar can transport (both literally and figuratively) and transform. So it's not all that surprising, come to think of it, that when you send out a call for work about transportation in Appalachia, you are rewarded with a generous helping of thoughtful, often eloquent writing.

— Jane Harris Woodside, editor

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: Editor, Now & Then, *ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614 or e-mail woodsidj@etsu.edu. Letters may be edited for length and clarity before publication.*

The Magic City
(Middlesboro, Ky., 1886-1893)

Lily Langtry, an investor, said she
would come to the new town by Yellow
Creek once she defeated rheumatism
and gout. So the Yellow Creek valley roared
on without her, with something for everyone
who could make it there. The British investors
had a town with "borough" at its end.

There was a golf course and an opera house.

Big hotels, six banks and a library.

And you could drink and drink and drink.

Like spikes driving into soft tissue, railroads
inched toward the mile-long tunnel under
the Cumberland Gap. Everywhere in Magic
City the wilderness lit up in the weird
green light of burning dollar bills.

For seven years it burned, and then the people
with their suits and appetites were gone.
The 700-room Four Seasons was torn down;
its cloth-of-gold decorations crated, sent
to the new roar of Chicago. But the tipples
were left, like still-functioning machines
on Golgotha: the three hours under the sun
had begun, the long black bleeding.

— Steve Harris

Steve Harris is a paralegal for the U.S. Department of the Interior. He and his wife and two sons live in Alexandria, Va. Harris has had work accepted for publication in upcoming issues of The Listening Eye, The Lamp Post, Black River Review, *and* Sojourners.

Going to Davenports'

by Dot Jackson

A family piles into a 1934 Ford and sets out on narrow, rutted mountain roads to practice the fine art of "dropping in."

Every year, when the leaves fall and I go out with my walnut sack, I am a little kid again, earning my way to Davenports'.

It was at the rock bottom of the Depression when we moved to Hothouse Township, as far west in North Carolina as you can go. I was eight years old, and that was the happiest place for a child, the most beautiful place that's ever been in the world.

A dirt road ran past our front steps. It followed the creek, crossing back-and-forth on little plank bridges, and if you were going south, just a few miles away, it crossed over into Georgia. Down in there somewhere, the Davenports lived.

The Davenports were my mother's cousins; they were a strand of the tangled kudzu vine that is our family tree. They were older. Mama had not been to see them since she was a girl, when the Davenports had crossed the Chattooga River into North Georgia from the hills of South Carolina, where our folks had all been since Noah.

Now that we were so close, Mama took it in her mind that we had to go and renew that old connection.

Now, I need to say here that for a long while, we had sojourned way down in the sandy flats before my daddy got a job that was our opportunity to come back as close to Home as we could manage. Our real, actual Home was off-limits to us for two reasons: There was no work, and there was plenty of bad blood due to the elopement of my mother and my daddy — of which my mother's Granny and other shooting kinfolk had most emphatically disapproved.

Too many seasons of exile in the flats may affect the upland mind in an unkind way, as we had much occasion to observe. Melancholy sometimes overcame one or the other of my parents. My father blamed it on land-crab holes, worthless palm trees, and "seeing way too far." My mother, I think, was simply lonely for the intimacy of kinship, of which she had been too long deprived. Family was and is more important to us than anything — except, of course, land.

In Hothouse, in upland North Carolina, we lived in the house with our landlords, Aunt Rosie and Uncle Tommy. They were not our blood, or at least not close, but they were better to us than some who were; they had taken us into their big old shingled house with the porch all around; they let us use the upstairs rooms where their children used to sleep, and we could draw water from their well and share their outhouses formally labeled "MEN'S" and "LADIES'" and fish in their creek and cook on their

Too many seasons of exile in the flats may affect the upland mind in an unkind way.

big wood range. I would love them forever. To my mind, they were my kin.

It is hard to imagine, in these days of fax and e-mail, how difficult it was to get in touch with people outside our own cove.

But the Davenports were Mama's.

People still drove mules in Hothouse. We didn't have a team of our own so we had to wait for my daddy to take us places in his 1934 Ford. It is hard to imagine, in these days of fax and e-mail, how difficult it was to get in touch with people outside our own cove.

Nobody on our road had a telephone or even a mailbox—a mailbox was an arm of the Federal Government, and the Government was in disfavor because it oppressed and tried to destroy a principal local industry so no one could keep a mailbox standing long. Mr. Kisselberg, the mailman, came by the house and took Aunt Rosie's shelled corn to the mill; he strapped the bushel sacks onto his T-Model's running boards and brought back the meal. But he left the U.S. mail up on the highway at the store.

In short, manners had to be different. "Dropping in" was the social way of life. When you decided to go visit somebody, for a day or for several weeks, you just picked up and went and hoped for the best—that is, that they would be home and have plenty of dinner cooking.

Well, Mama got to planning this trip to Davenports'. It turned more enticing with every detail: like, the Davenport women fried spring chickens about every day. They made the lightest biscuits and the best cakes in the country. The men smoked hams and kept bees and grew wagonloads of apples. The coffeepot was always on at the Davenports'.

Mountains of fried pies cooled aromatically in their kitchen safe. Something that smelled like satisfaction always simmered on the back eye of their stove.

As word of this expedition spread, several around said they wanted to go. One of the old men got me to help pick up a bushel of walnuts to take so we would not show up at Davenports' empty-handed.

Aunt Rosie took it all in, but she never offered to go with us. In her still, small voice, she said, "Well, now, I tell y'ns, that's a bad ol' road. I don't know ... "

This 1941 family portrait was taken a few days before the infamous excursion to Davenports'. Nine-year-old Bitsy Mauldin (the author) stands with her mother, Det; brother Sonny; father, Walt; and aunts Dora Davis and Bird Montgomery. World War II would start in December, and this was one of the last times all these people gathered together. Sonny Mauldin did not return alive from his service in the war.

Soon, on a cool Sunday morning, we started out through the gold of finished cornfields into the mist. I don't know how many of us there were in that old Ford. Narrow as a coffin, it was packed with men clean and starched and hatted, women corseted and powdered with black straw birds' nests on their heads. I was on somebody's lap, with the walnuts at our feet.

For a way, the road was graveled and a good two-horse wagon wide. At the Georgia line, it narrowed. Swallowed by the woods, it turned to ruts. But it went on and on. Hours. We rolled through streams that leaked in through the floorboards; we strained upward, grinding gears, dodging boulders.

The ruts withered to a single track—the kind made by bears and foraging hogs. Then we came to a house, of sorts. Kids playing in the yard ran like little quail to hide themselves in their mother's skirt. The mother fled inside the house, and the whole bunch peered around the door frame with big round unbelieving eyes. Men peeped from behind trees, watching this quare thing full of people creep by, maybe wondering whether they ought to shoot it. We waved. They did not. This was not Davenports'.

"I don't believe them people ever seen an auto-MObile," one of the elders remarked in awe.

"Not on *this* hog-track, they've not," replied another.

It was noon, then afternoon. Questions, muttered fuss-words, silence. At last, the sun shone ahead on a clearing. We came out between green pastures. Up on a rise, there was a stand of dark, skinny junipers, and among them, a regal white frame farm house, sparkling like Valhalla against the sky. My mother was moved almost to tears.

Davenports'.

We pulled up in front. Everything was quiet, except for growling stomachs. No smoke came from the chimneys. No smell of bubbling red-eye gravy nor sweet potato pie. We got out and

When you decided to go visit somebody, for a day or for several weeks, you just picked up and went and hoped for the best.

stretched and started up the path, and not even the hounds came to meet us. One of the men knocked and knocked on the door. Another, still hopeful, went around to the barn.

The Davenports, alas, had gone visiting.

Davenport chickens that would live to see another Sunday cocked their heads at us as we stood dejected. Someone wondered if it was honest to use the Davenports' outhouse when they weren't home. Somebody brazenly drew a round of icy water from their well. All ears were tuned, hopeful, to the road for sounds of

For a way, the road was graveled and a good two-horse wagon wide. At the Georgia line, it narrowed. Swallowed by the woods, it turned to ruts. But it went on and on.

imminent arrival. All eyes watched for a redeeming cloud of dust.

The sun was moving well into the west. At last, there was nothing to do but leave the sack of walnuts, missing a few, and wistfully turn around and head for home.

I do not remember that we ever saw the Davenports. It is doubtful that anyone thought to put a note on the door or on the walnuts, telling them that we had been there. Life got busier. There were wise and gentle people in the township who became our friends.

But the trip went down in family legend. Ever after, when the road of great expectations dead-ended at a chasm, there was a saying for it: "Well, I knowed when he bought that old car, he was goin' to Davenports'." N&T

While she was growing up, Dot Jackson (aka Bitsy Mauldin) was a TVA kid who lived anywhere and everywhere they were building a dam. She now makes a very poor living writing and editing in Six Mile, S.C., located right in the front wave of the Blue Ridge.

Letting Her Go

She asked me to write down the route
through Ohio and Indiana, then the last leg,
South Bend to St. Joseph, my newly married
daughter who wants to show her husband
Lake Michigan. Of course, they would drive
by her dead grandmother's house, one block
from the shore. The grandmother she cried over,
whose house she knows well. I told her
it won't be easy to write all that down,
it's not only a matter of highways, this way
I travel by some homing instinct heading northwest.
For this woman who grew, nestled in mountains,
the land will be flatter than she remembers.
August corn stands thick as a forest.
It's easy to miss the U.S. 12 by-pass.

And she can't think that you stand
on the bluff overlooking the lake saying
there it is and expect someone to know
what we know. On an August blue day
you can't see sailboats shift
like bright knives in the wind
and think someone will understand
what it looks like in winter, in storms,
in the dark. That takes years.
New owners of her grandmother's house
have pulled out the shrubs. She can't
knock on the door and ask after her old swing
in the basement. They will never
be able to make that last left turn
off the highway. Don't forget,
I told her, it's a ten-hour drive.

—Sandra Marshburn

Sandra Marshburn has had poems published in various periodicals, with recent work in Tar River Poetry, Flyway, *and* Farmer's Market. *Her chapbook,* Controlled Flight, *was published in 1990 by Alms House Press. March Street Press produced a second chapbook,* Undertow, *in 1992. Marshburn lives in Charleston, W.Va., and teaches writing classes at West Virginia State College.*

A Forgotten Pioneer

by Julia and Steven Hensley
with Jim Kevin

Bad luck and bad weather obscure a gifted Appalachian engineer's solutions to the problems of artificial flight.

The sudden summer squall caught the four men by surprise. Ominous clouds rolled across the sky, obscuring the warm August sun over the Outer Banks. Anxiously, three of the men sprinted toward their two experimental gliders lying on the beach near the small life-saving station of Kill Devil Hill, N.C., while the fourth ran to open the doors of the makeshift shed built there last year.

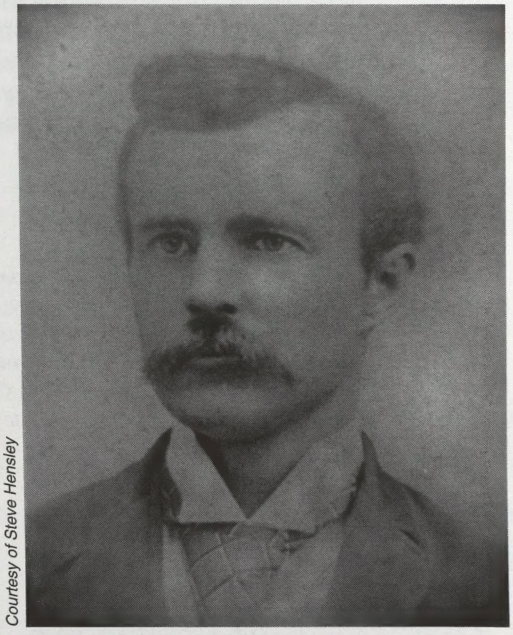
"Hurry!" shouted George Spratt, holding the shed's door against the wind and squinting into the stinging sand.

Wilbur and Orville Wright, each holding onto a wing of their newest design, fought the bucking craft into the lee of the shed and through the door. Turning, they watched Edward Huffaker single-handedly trying to pull his lightweight glider toward them.

"There's no more room!" The tiny shed was full.

Huffaker stood drenched, watching the rain and wind pummel his fragile machine. Carefully he had moved it by wagon from his barn to the railroad depot at Chuckey City in Northeast Tennessee, then by rail to Elizabeth City, N.C. There a barge ferried it across Albemarle Sound to the barrier island. Now the glider lay in ruins on the wet sand—a day before its scheduled first flight.

It was 1901. Following a decade of sophisticated and sometimes secret experimentation in aeronautics, Huffaker had designed and constructed this glider of lightweight composite materials. At the urging of aviation pioneer Octave Chanute, a wealthy Chicago industrialist, he agreed to join these three protégés of Chanute's near Kitty Hawk, N.C. The Wrights were to test-fly both their own latest effort and Huffaker's new glider. Spratt, a young inventor from Coatesville, Pa., came to assist with the tests.



Courtesy of Steve Hensley

Edward Chalmers Huffaker (ca. 1894) was a civil engineer, surveyor, inventor, and an aviation pioneer.

The Wrights' interest in aviation began only two years previously. When they first wrote to the Smithsonian Institution for information about artificial flight, Huffaker's *On Soaring Flight* was one of five publications sent to them. They would continue to improve their designs for two more years before achieving successful powered flight with a pilot in December 1903. Huffaker returned to Tennessee and vanished from history.

A Theory of Flight

Edward Chalmers Huffaker was the oldest of the eight children of the Rev. J. N. S. Huffaker, a circuit-riding

Methodist minister, and Sarah Jane Ripley of Seven Islands, Tenn., just a few miles east of Knoxville. Huffaker graduated in 1880 from Emory & Henry College in Virginia with honors in mathematics and natural philosophy. Fluent in Latin, Greek, and French, he earned a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Virginia in 1884. After teaching for a few years in Virginia, Kentucky, and Louisiana, he married Cora Fishburn in 1888. Shortly after their move to Kentucky, however, she died of tuberculosis. Huffaker returned home to establish his own surveying business in Bristol, Tenn., in 1891.

On weekends, he visited a brother and his widowed father in Chuckey City, a small railroad town located in the broad Nolichucky River Valley. Now, as an established engineer, Huffaker spent his leisure hours studying magazines and journals that proposed and vigorously debated various theories of artificial flight. Beginning in 1891, he spent his free time documenting the flights of soaring birds, precisely measuring the duration of their flights with a stopwatch and their changing altitude and angles of bank with the most accurate surveying instruments available.

Courtesy of Steve Hensley

Carrie Sue (Redding) Huffaker posed with her son, Robert Moreland, ca. 1896.

He was developing his own theory of flight. He measured the surface areas of numerous birds' wings and carefully observed the shape of their wings in flight. Other aviators believed that the ramming effect of rushing air on the underside of a wing created lift. Huffaker turned his attention to the top of the wing, where the curved shape forces the air particles to move upwards and spread apart before they drop back down and flow off the rear of the wing. This expansion of air molecules reduces their density and thus their pressure. The wing's shape, then, creates the difference in air pressure that results in lift. Huffaker's observations also convinced him that the tail feathers are used entirely to control the direction of the flight. The design of any successful flying machine would have to be based on these principles.

> Huffaker stood drenched, watching the rain and wind pummel his fragile machine.

He began to build and test gliding models. Huffaker was one of hundreds of experimenters around the world who were independently working on flying machines. Among those experimenters was Samuel P. Langley in Washington, D.C. After a brilliant career as an astronomer and physicist, Langley had taken on the task of building a heavier-than-air flying machine with the resources of the Smithsonian Institution and the financial backing of the U.S. government.

It was to Langley that Huffaker wrote a 26-page letter on January 13, 1893, describing his "study of natural and artificial flight" and offering "considerations upon the subject." With carefully prepared tables and diagrams, Huffaker explained the role in flight of the curved surface of the top of the wing. Langley wrote back that while the theory of pressure differences in the flow of water had been fully explained by Swiss mathematician Daniel Bernoulli in the 18th century, Huffaker's application of Bernoulli's Principle to the flow of air was probably new. Langley added that he found the discussion instructive.

Marriage and Career

Sometime before May 1894, Huffaker proposed marriage to Carrie Sue Redding of Hazelhurst, Miss. They met in 1887 in Jackson, La., where he had taught mathematics at Centenary College, she piano at Millwood Academy.

Huffaker was a faithful and delightful correspondent. He told her stories about his adventures surveying, traveling in the Tennessee mountains with two partners and taking shelter with local families. On one such trip, he wrote, "The girl and her mother … have been chasing a frying-sized chicken for some time, with what final success I am at a loss to know. But," he added, obviously having worked up an appetite, "I hope they caught it."

Eventually Redding accepted, though apparently with some trepidation. "I have never come right down to thinking of marrying anybody before, it always seemed such a far-off matter for me to consider," she wrote, "so bear with me awhile until I grow a little accustomed to the thought." She then quizzed him: "What church are you a member of, if any? I hope you are a Methodist; but I have really forgotten. You don't chew tobacco do you? Tell me," she instructed. "Yours, Carrie R."

Huffaker must have provided satisfactory answers to these burning questions because wedding plans proceeded. Then in early December 1894, two weeks before the wedding date, he received a letter from Langley offering him a position as an assistant in aeronautical experiments, work to begin on January 1.

> Other aviators believed that the ramming effect of rushing air on the underside of a wing created lift. Huffaker turned his attention to the top of the wing.

"How does that strike your majesty?" Huffaker wrote exuberantly to his fiancée. "Won't it be delightful, dear, living in Washington? The very place above all others that I have wanted to live in, and now to live there with you on a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year, sure money, and not a great deal to do. God is very good to us, my dear."

Wright State University Special Collections and Archives

Octave Chanute, Wilbur Wright, Edward Huffaker and Orville Wright (l to r) met to discuss plans in the shelter at the camp at Kill Devil Hills, N.C., in the summer of 1901.

The wedding occurred as planned on December 19, 1894. In January, Huffaker left for Washington alone, leaving his bride behind in Bristol, Tenn., with his two sisters until he could find a suitable place to live. They corresponded daily. On January 9th, he declared: "In all my life I have never had work I liked so well. I think too I am succeeding pretty well with it. The Prof's in to see me every day and usually has quite a talk with me… But he is a good old man in spite of his faultfinding — an old bachelor — and I like him very much."

The Flight of Model No. 5

Soon after Huffaker arrived in Washington, Langley — the "good old man" who controlled the Smithsonian with an iron hand — requested a demonstration of the capabilities of the younger man's model. Huffaker launched the glider over the parapet of the Smithsonian's South Tower. It flew more than 600 feet, making its customary long, gradual descent. Impressed by its success, Langley instructed Huffaker to redesign his Model No. 5, already under construction, and to fit it with Huffaker's wing design. Models No. 1 through 4 had flown, as a local newsman had reported, "like a shovel of wet cement." But Langley hoped that Model No. 5, a half-scaled flying machine powered by a one-horsepower engine turning two propellers, would bring him closer to successful artificial flight.

In a letter to his wife, Huffaker described the dark basement room where he and two assistants were to work: "It will all be secret work with locked doors," he confided, "and I am under promise to keep my lips eternally sealed in regard to what goes on. But I guess it won't count with you, will it, my love? I mean to tell you everything you care to know."

Model No. 5 was completed in April 1896. The research team disassembled it, packed it into wooden crates, and moved it with great secrecy across the Potomac River to Quantico Marine Station in Northern Virginia. Langley had rented a houseboat and built a 30-foot launching rail on top of it. He had the houseboat moved down the Potomac to where Smithsonian staff members placed the reassembled Model No. 5 on the launching rail. Because of Langley's desire for secrecy, only a detachment of Marines, the Smithsonian staff, and a few invited guests would witness the flight of Model No. 5.

Among the guests was Alexander Graham Bell. He watched as the "Aerodrome" rose into the wind at a speed of between 20 and 25 miles an hour and proceeded to swing around in wide, ascending circles until it ran out of fuel. "The machine, deprived of the aid of its propellers, to my surprise did not fall," Bell later wrote, "but settled down so softly and gently that it touched the water without the least shock, and was in fact immediately ready for another trial."

The second trial went just as smoothly as the first. The craft's "motion was in fact so steady that I think a glass of water on its surface would have remained unspilled," Bell reported, noting that the craft cleared the treetops on a nearby wooded promontory by a good 20 or 30 feet. The impressed Bell later commented to the press that the flights of Model No. 5, each covering a little over 3,000 feet, were "the greatest engineering feat in the history of mankind."

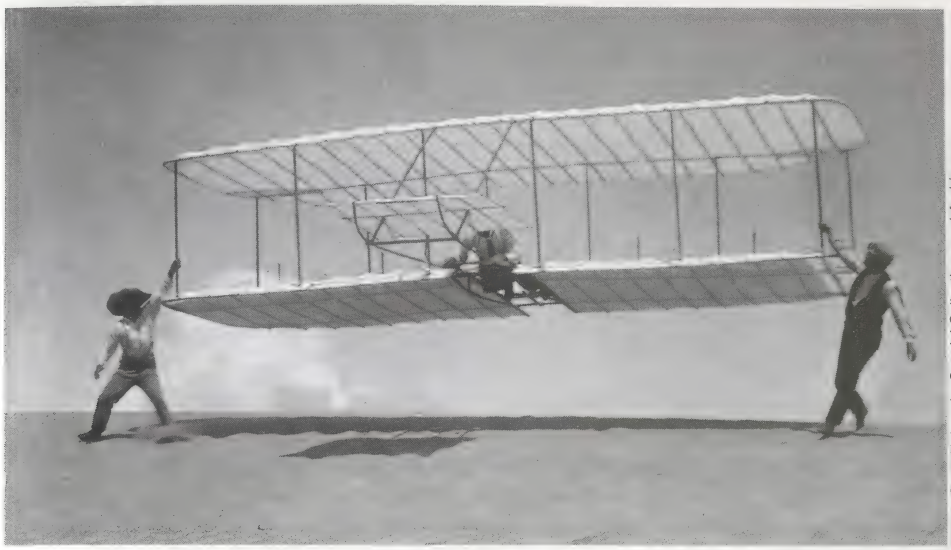
Home to Tennessee

Immediately work began on the full-scale flying machine. Enthusiasm was high, but Langley and Huffaker were both strong-willed and outspoken; their disagreements became more frequent. The conservative Langley insisted that the full-scale Aerodrome be launched off the houseboat rail so that the operator might survive a fall into the water. Huffaker did not think the rail could be made long enough to allow a sufficient takeoff run. He argued that tests should be made near the ocean, launched from the sloping dunes into a steady wind.

Huffaker came to feel that his position at the Smithsonian was uncertain. He now had a one-year-old son, and Carrie Sue was expecting again. In an effort to provide some stability for his family, he sent them from Washington to Chuckey City to live with his brother, Robert Huffaker, a physician. Once again, the letters went back and forth daily. Huffaker was philosophical about his troubles with Langley: "I was told today that my predecessor… bore with him as long as he could, and at length turned to cursing him. He cursed him first in English and then he tried cursing him in French, and then ended by cursing him in German. Unfortunately, I can only swear in English, and not very proficiently in that. My education has been sadly neglected."

> "Won't it be delightful, dear, living in Washington? To live there with you on a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year, sure money, and not a great deal to do. God is very good to us."

Huffaker began to investigate other job possibilities. On October 22, 1898, his and Carrie Sue's daughter was born. The couple wanted to settle down with their whole family together. Carrie moved to Greeneville, Tenn., and lived at the General Morgan Inn while teaching music. Huffaker's unmarried sisters were willing baby sitters.



Wright State University Special Collections and Archives

Outer Banks resident Dan Tate and Edward Huffaker launch Wilbur Wright in the Wrights' glider, summer 1901.

Huffaker resigned from the Smithsonian in December 1898 and came home to Chuckey City, where Langley occasionally sent him funds to continue aeronautical experiments. Then, in the summer of 1899, a typhoid epidemic swept through Greene County, and Huffaker's troubles with Langley and the Aerodrome were eclipsed by tragedy. Carrie Sue died on September 15th.

Catastrophe

If any one person should be called the "Father of American Aviation," it is Octave Chanute. Trained as a civil engineer, he developed a process for preserving railroad crossties just as the great westward expansion was beginning. With a strong desire to conquer the air and millions of dollars to spend, Chanute contributed freely to what he called "The Cause" and served as liaison in the community of aviation enthusiasts. His 1892 book, *Progress in Flying Machines,* was the most comprehensive work on the subject at the time.

> "It will all be secret work with locked doors, and I am under promise to keep my lips eternally sealed in regard to what goes on."

It was Chanute who first suggested to Langley that he hire Edward Huffaker, and after Huffaker left the Smithsonian, it was Chanute who encouraged him to continue his experimentation. Eventually, Chanute hired Huffaker, at a salary of $50 per month, to build a full-sized glider, incorporating a system for automatic stability. This system was to prevent the dangerous stalls that sent early aircraft spinning to the ground. Until the problem was finally solved in the 1930s, human pilots had to be very proficient to compensate manually for the unpredictability of their machines.

On June 29, 1901, traveling in his private railroad car, Chanute came to Chuckey City to check on Huffaker's progress. Huffaker, in his brother's carriage, drove Chanute to the barn in which he had constructed the glider.

Huffaker had made the glider's frame of lynwood — very light, but strong. He covered the wings with cambric and coated them with shellac. At Chanute's suggestion, Huffaker had strengthened the wing with braces made of rolled tubes of paper and shellac. Although the paper tubes were Chanute's idea, the older man came to mistrust this feature of the design. Chanute, however, went ahead with arrangements for testing it with two other protégés, 34-year-old Wilbur and 29-year-old Orville Wright, sons of a United Brethren bishop who had settled in Dayton, Ohio. The Wright brothers would test-fly Huffaker's glider. In return, Huffaker would assist them at Kill Devil Hills with engineering data and record-keeping.

In July, Huffaker disassembled and crated the glider and sent it on the train to North Carolina. Chanute sent some last-minute instructions: "Mr. Wright will be pleased to have you join him, and I enclose his letter to you. I also enclose P.O. Order for $100 for expenses… I do not think you will need shelter for your machine," he predicted, a prediction that proved to be all too inaccurate, "but you had better buy a cot and a blanket in Norfolk."

Huffaker arrived in camp on July 18, 1901. He wrote in his diary: "I found the Wrights busy with their cooking stove. With the doors of their workshop open, the wind blew out the lamps and with them closed, the mosquitoes made it so lively that they could do no cooking." Throughout their stay at the Carolina coast, the mosquitoes made life, in Huffaker's words, "all but unendurable."

The Wrights' glider was ready for testing within a week. First results were disappointing. Huffaker recorded in his diary: "The center of gravity seems to be too far forward." The four made adjustments, and tests continued. By day, they experimented. By night, they theorized.

Huffaker was anxious to complete and test his own machine. On August 1st, it was nearly ready when he spotted dark clouds approaching. Wind and rain pounded the paper-and-shellac tubes to pulp and ripped the wings apart. He later wrote in his diary, "It will have to be rebuilt."

> The Wright brothers would test-fly Huffaker's glider. In return, Huffaker would assist them at Kitty Hawk with engineering data and record-keeping.

Starting on August 8th, the Wrights proceeded to test their own undamaged glider at least a dozen times until the weather and unexpected, puzzling difficulties they encountered turning the craft right and left sent them home early and disheartened.

Almost two years later, in October 1903, Langley's Aerodrome was ready for testing. The takeoff from the complicated rail assembly on top of the houseboat began perfectly, but at the

end of the 100-foot track, a guy-wire snagged the wing, and the plane plunged into the water.

The Wrights learned of this failure while at Kitty Hawk. They too planned to attempt a powered flight this season. In November, Chanute wrote them that Langley was requesting additional funds and would doubtless be making another attempt with the Aerodrome. Rather than test their new airplane first as a glider, they quickly decided to go ahead with their powered experiment.

Wright State University Special Collections and Archives

Before being tested, Huffaker's carefully engineered glider became a pile of twisted rubbish after a storm on August 1, 1901.

On November 28th, as they prepared for flight, they discovered a crack in one of the propeller shafts. Expecting to hear any day that Langley had beaten them, Orville returned home to Dayton to make new, stronger shafts. On the train back to Kitty Hawk, he read a newspaper account of the final failure of Langley's Aerodrome on December 8th. On December 17, 1903, Orville Wright made the world's first flight in a powered heavier-than-air machine with a pilot.

Conflict

Some aviation historians, drawing upon only a handful of Wilbur Wright's 1901-1902 letters and one written by his sister Katharine, have depicted Huffaker as an uncouth, slovenly, Bible-thumping individual who contributed little to the 1901 tests at Kill Devil Hills.

There was certainly a significant personality conflict between Huffaker and at least Wilbur Wright, who seemed to have found *everything* about Huffaker annoying. However, the discovery

> Huffaker was anxious to complete and test his own machine. On August 1st, it was nearly ready when he spotted dark clouds approaching.

and study of hundreds of letters exchanged by Huffaker with his family, co-workers, and fellow aviation pioneers — plus his children's recollections of Huffaker's statements on the matter many years later — provide a more balanced view of that disagreement.

Several factors probably contributed to the tension evident in the Wright letters. One was almost certainly the cultural bias against mountain dwellers found in those from the sort of urban, middle-class, manufacturing background from which the Wrights came. Even today, educated people from the hills of Appalachia report that their distinct dialect often brings instant and certainly not always favorable notice on the part of people from outside the region, usually triggering stereotypic assumptions on their part.

The discrepancy in education may also have fanned the flames. Civil engineer Huffaker possessed impressive academic credentials, while the Wrights had completed only high school and had little background in mathematics. The brothers took a practical, rather than a theoretical, approach to problem-solving. In his letters home, Huffaker despaired of the Wrights' ever understanding his explanations of lift, drag, thrust, and gravity. He was bothered, his daughter Mariada McCall recalled, by their lack of formal training in science and engineering, but he did admire their craftsmanship. He deemed them thorough experimenters, but he believed that they had not the slightest idea *why* their airplane flew.

Misunderstandings

A major focus of Wilbur's disdain was Huffaker's lack of social graces. Despite his education, Huffaker took readily to life in the mountains of Appalachia. He spent many summers surveying the most rugged sections of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, roughing it for weeks at a time. He was comfortable wearing the same clothes for two weeks and going unwashed.

In contrast, the Wrights — who both took vows never to marry and devoted themselves to each other and the cause of aviation — washed, shaved, changed clothes, and used toilet water daily and brought to the dunes a box of celluloid collars so they might have a fresh one for each day. The Wrights insisted that the pots and dishes be washed after every meal and that each be returned to its precise storage spot on the shelf. Wilbur complained in letters to their sister that Huffaker wouldn't help with the dishes.

Such fastidiousness in a primitive work camp annoyed and offended Huffaker, and he refused to cooperate. For him, all this was enough to put the brothers' manhood in question. When Huffaker returned home, he told folks what "sissies" the Wrights were. He may even have voiced this opinion directly to them because Wilbur reported that Huffaker had been pushing his own views of morality on them.

Nothing in the collection of Huffaker's correspondence even suggests that he was given to sermonizing or preaching — or even that he took religion very seriously. Frustrated, however, by his failure after four years to convince Langley of the correct way to construct and launch the Aerodrome, still upset by the recent death of his second wife, and feeling betrayed by both Chanute and the Wrights, both of whom had told him there would be adequate shelter for his glider, the 45-year-old Huffaker may well have overreacted to the situation.

Huffaker and the Wrights probably also had conflicting inter-

pretations of what assistance Chanute had expected Huffaker to provide. The Wrights had struggled before with their glider in the wind on the dunes. Very likely their idea of help was to have some muscle to assist in hauling the craft up the sandhills and holding it steady against the wind. In his private letters to Chanute and Spratt, Wilbur Wright implied that Huffaker had been lazy, sitting at a distance while taking measurements and observing their efforts.

Years of experience, however, had taught Huffaker the value of observation. From a distance, with only surveying instruments and a stopwatch, he could discern details in the movements of a soaring bird (or a glider) that might not be evident up close. And Huffaker liked to think about how a wing's shape made flight possible. He helped by solving the theoretical problems, observing how their gliders reacted to invisible forces, and trying (apparently without success) to explain those forces to the Wright brothers.

Wilbur Wright's ridicule of Huffaker's glider didn't help

> Some aviation historians have depicted Huffaker as an uncouth, slovenly, Bible-thumping individual who contributed little to the 1901 tests at Kill Devil Hills.

matters. The Wrights misunderstood the glider, much as they misunderstood Huffaker. Its purpose was to test certain features of stability. Other innovative aspects included the use of composite bracing structures comprised of layers of tightly rolled paper and varnish. Although these anticipated today's fiberglass and resin construction by about 50 years, they served the same purpose: to reduce cost, weight, and building time.

Huffaker knew, of course, that the composite braces would not stand up to prolonged use or to rainstorms. He never intended that they should. He designed the glider to be packed up and shipped to the beach for a few test flights. It was the Wrights who delayed the testing and who chose to enclose their own glider in a protective shelter while leaving Huffaker's outside.

The Great Trial

Huffaker's and the Wrights' paths crossed once again when Wilbur Wright wrote in 1912, explaining that the Wrights' lawyers expected to need Huffaker as a legal witness in *Wright vs. Curtiss.* This was the patent infringement suit brought by the brothers against Glenn Curtiss, a famous motorcycle manufacturer and daredevil racer who had adapted his light, powerful motorcycle engines to airplanes. The Wrights claimed that any type of flying machine was covered by their 1906 patent.

In this letter, Wilbur recalled the difficulties they had faced together at Kill Devil Hills in 1901 and how they, as fellow pioneers, were being dismissed by present-day writers. Was this an attempt to mollify Huffaker? Or did it reflect, possibly, the mellowing of memories about a past episode? In any case, the Wrights' lawyers eventually decided that they did not need Huffaker's testimony.

In January 1915, Huffaker became the postmaster at Chuckey ("City" had been dropped in 1904). But soon, he was called to New York by Curtiss' lawyers to testify about the development of Langley's Aerodrome in the Wrights' lawsuit, the nation's most publicized trial of the time. Both parties had fortunes at stake.

Curtiss' contention was that, while the Wrights were the first to fly, the Aerodrome was actually the first successful airplane design. He claimed it would have flown had it been launched differently, as Huffaker had argued years earlier. To prove his claim, Curtiss acquired the wreckage of the Aerodrome from the Smithsonian, rebuilt it, and flew it off Keuka Lake in New York state.

After nine years of litigation, the court upheld the Wrights' claim in 1917. In the end, though, it didn't really matter. Many of the Wrights' ideas were technological dead ends, and the rapidly changing science of aeronautics was already leaving them behind.

Experimenting to the End

After his involvement in the Wright trial, Huffaker returned to Chuckey with a renewed interest in aviation. He began to build and fly models again. Once again, the purpose of his new experiments was to design an "automatically stable" airplane, a problem he had first tackled almost 20 years earlier.

Huffaker and his son Moreland were granted a patent on the new aircraft design on November 14, 1922. The patent described a stabilizing device that worked by automatically adjusting the angle at which the wing meets the air. The drawings showed an aircraft with a single wing below the fuselage, a new idea at the time but one that is used today throughout the world. But the patent stressed the stabilizing feature, and Huffaker was never able later to prove infringement of the monoplane design.

He continued experimenting with model airplanes. In 1935, at the age of 79, he wrote the Smithsonian seeking a grant to experiment with his latest idea, a "flying wing," a futuristic design that eliminated the need for a fuselage and tail.

He died in 1937, having never flown in an airplane. N&T

Steven Hensley is a flight instructor and aircraft mechanic. His wife, Julia, is director of education at Trinity United Methodist Church in Greeneville, Tenn. The Hensleys currently reside in Chuckey, Tenn. just across the Nolichucky River from where Edward Huffaker lived.

Courtesy of Steve Hensley

The Huffaker family gathers together at the home of Robert O. Huffaker in Chuckey City (now Chuckey), Tenn. (date unknown).

Letters Lift Aviation Pioneer Out of Obscurity

Steven Hensley's grandmother, owner of a Greene County, Tenn., retirement home, leased or bought farms, then used their barns to store and dry tobacco. In the summer of 1957, she sent the 15-year-old Hensley to clean out a barn on the Huffaker farm she had recently acquired. Entering the dimly lit breezeway, he saw letters lying on the ground.

The envelopes were in good condition, the handwriting legible, and the postmark dates nearly a century old. Even as a teenager, he recognized that these had to be valuable. Some were addressed to a "Mrs. Huffaker," written on stationery from the Smithsonian Institution, others to "Dr. Robert Huffaker" of Chuckey City, Tenn.

"I had never heard of these people," says Hensley. The letters told of a brilliant young inventor, engineer, and surveyor — Edward C. Huffaker — who had built a glider in that very barn, then shipped it to Kitty Hawk, N.C., in 1901, where the Wright brothers were to test it. Hensley discovered that Huffaker and his second wife, Carrie Sue Redding, had once lived in Washington, D.C., in an apartment near the Smithsonian where they paid $11 rent each month.

He found letters in every stall. When he reached the tack room, the only room with a wooden floor and a door with a lock, he found a leather-bound wooden trunk that held hundreds of letters, newspaper clippings, dress patterns, and notebooks. Among these were photographs from aviation pioneer Octave Chanute; letters from the third Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Samuel Pierpont Langley; and love letters.

Next, Hensley explored the attic of the abandoned house near the barn, raking aside coal dust and bird droppings to find magazines, newspapers, and still more letters. They revealed that the farm once belonged to Edward Huffaker's brother, Robert O. Huffaker, a physician who had practiced medicine in that very house and made calls in his horse-drawn buggy for over 40 years. His accounts lists showed that most house calls were $1 or less.

"My grandmother said that Dr. Huffaker had delivered two of her children in her home and had been paid with eggs," Hensley recalls.

Hensley forgot about the letters as he moved on to college, the Air Force, and a career as a commercial pilot, flight instructor, and aircraft mechanic. With a lifelong interest in anything associated with aviation, he was browsing an obscure magazine when he saw an article about aviation pioneer Augustus Herring that mentioned a co-worker of Herring's from Tennessee — E. C. Huffaker.

Curious, Hensley reread the letters he had saved and confirmed that the author of so many of them was indeed the unrecognized pioneer in the development of flying machines.

For the next three decades, Hensley researched Huffaker's life; corresponded with aviation historians; and visited the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, the archives of Emory & Henry College where Huffaker had earned his undergraduate degree, and other repositories. With his wife Julie, he interviewed Huffaker's surviving children, grandchildren, and co-workers.

The Huffaker house and barn are gone now, torn down by one of Hensley's uncles whom Dr. Huffaker had delivered. Hensley saved as much of the original buildings as he could. "I used the barn timbers and some of the siding to build a hangar where I now restore old airplanes. The Huffaker outhouse was in excellent condition, so I moved it to my place and have it back in operation."

All the materials Hensley stumbled across some 40 years ago — the letters and clippings — now reside in boxes in his rural Tennessee home along with notebooks, photographs, and interviews, awaiting the day he finds the funding that will enable him to publish the story of a person he regards as an unsung hero of early aviation.

— Jim Kevin

Jim Kevin is a free-lance editor who met the Hensleys when they were fellow students in East Tennessee State University's graduate program in storytelling.

Flying Back from Birmingham

As usual, I take a window seat.
In one sweating hand
I grip my phantom pilot's wheel,
keep the other free
to nudge an unseen throttle:
illusion of control.

Last night, I watched a woman
dancing in a bar. As the music
whined like turbines, she rose
above the dusky smoke and noise,
sped off the edges of her world,
leaning, banking in the white
rush all around her.

I too want to go like that
in takeoff, feel the wind
beneath me lighten,
feel the break-away
into the dark blue altitudes of air

But I can't. That woman
danced upon the ground, however
winged her joy; and though,
at last, I danced with her,
and felt escape's thrill
roaring like an engine,
I came down again, content
with earth, and gravity, and rest.

Even now, looking down
behind the fragile, bending wing
from thirty thousand feet,
I see a Georgia ridge extend,
cut clean in morning shadows,
fifty miles or more:

It is beautiful, but too distant,
a velvet rumple
in the green gown of a world
womanly, enduring.
She waits patiently for me
to come to her again,
my nervous thanks at touchdown
a chant of vows renewed
in our old, persistent marriage.

—Richard Hague

Along with pursuing a career in writing, Richard Hague has taught literature, writing, humanities, and film at Purcell Marian High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, since 1969. His poetry and nonfiction have appeared in numerous publications. His collection of essays and stories, Milltown Natural, *was nominated for a 1997 National Book Award.*

Night Trains Are Forever

by Edward J. Myers

A New York photographer comes south to capture, in thousands of haunting images, the passing of the old steam-powered locomotives.

Thomas Wolfe felt the magic of the rails. In his novel *Of Time and the River,* he wrote: "Toward midnight, there is another pause at a larger town — the last stop in Catawba — again, the feeling of wild unrest and nameless joy and sorrow. The traveler gets out, walks up and down the platform, sees the vast slow flare and steaming of the mighty engine, rushes into the station, and looks into the faces of all the people passing with the same sense of familiarity… that lonely, strange, and poignantly wordless feeling that Americans know so well. And in the train, and in ten thousand little towns, the sleepers sleep upon the earth."

O. Winston Link

O. Winston Link (l) and his assistant, George Thom, stand with some of the unusual equipment Link designed to get his dramatic nighttime photographs (1956).

O. Winston Link must have felt some of the same uncertainty as he rode the rails in the mid-1950s on what would soon become vestiges of old iron bones in some central railroad yard. But his overwhelming love of the steam whistle, the sounds and smells of the tracks just couldn't fade into oblivion — simply another shadow along the glorious path called progress.

So Winston Link came to an inspired decision: He would use his photographic skills to save an era. It wouldn't be an easy undertaking, and it called for creative planning. But with good equipment for that time — and quite a bit of pioneering and guesswork — he put his advertising eye to work.

Trains are not easy subjects. They stretch long and bulky and are forever coming and going. They pass under, through, and over unattractive obstacles and terrain. They traverse rivers, hide among forests, and pop out of tunnels. And they sometimes follow awful schedules.

Yet trains have always had a sort of individual magic. Perhaps it's something wrapped up in a memory. Maybe a day someone came or went. A place. A year. A war. Even a good novel. Perhaps a time of change, like that which Wolfe narrates so poignantly. Such coupling with human emotion seemed to be the

trains Link wanted to capture on film. How could he?

A Football Field of Lights

With people, of course. He would use people as key players, catching them in their usual routines, allowing the train to become a central but unobtrusive part of the scene. And he would do it at night. People with trains passing in the night. That way, there would be no cluttered landscapes or dull, unpleasant diversions. With the proper lighting, his black-and-white scenes became almost surreal, providing that single evasive element of magic that any great work of art projects.

Trains are not easy subjects. They stretch long and bulky and are forever coming and going.

But this was the 1950s, and it must have seemed to Link that it would take a football field of lights to get the pictures he envisioned. In the end, it just about did. He had to devise his own flash system, using over 60 bulky flashbulbs mounted into large aluminum reflectors that had to be rounded and deepened to his own specifications. He designed a special battery capacitor to find enough power to fire the flashes and trigger the shutter releases of his large 4-x-5 format cameras.

Everything had to happen at the exact same second to get the shot. With a total of 15 reflectors, Link had to use his engineering background to decide placement. Even after all these arduous preparations, he still often had to run nearly a mile of electrical wiring over hills, hollows, and streams. He rode the trains he photographed — in some cases, many times. He studied the routes and listened carefully to the Norfolk & Western (N&W) railroad workers and engineers, who sometimes provided suggestions that decided the best location for a shot.

Beginnings

The beginning of Link's passion for trains goes back to the age of four. "My father introduced me to all kinds of things to see what might take hold," the now 83-year-old photographer once told friend, writer, and agent Thomas Garver. Growing up in Brooklyn, N.Y., still wide-eyed and curious at the beginning of the Roaring '20s, Link listened carefully to his father's advice. In the June 1995 issue of *Current Biography,* Garver says that Link's father taught the boy that accuracy, patience, consideration of others, and honesty were all-important, that he should always despise greed and slipshod work. Even as a teenager, the young Link often slipped off to watch the daily activity in the railroad yards in nearby New Jersey.

It must have seemed to Link that it would take a football field of lights to get the pictures he envisioned. In the end, it just about did.

During the years that followed, as he obediently followed his father's wishes and took a degree in civil engineering at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn (now Polytechnic University), cameras were always close at hand. And in 1937, Link finally gave in and took a photography position with a New York public relations firm. With the exception of wartime work on a project run by Columbia University's Office of Scientific Research and Development, he would never use his engineering degree in its stated sense. He said many times, however, that it was a valuable tool.

A hearing defect resulting from a childhood illness kept him out of World War II. When the war ended, he started his own photography/public relations business in New York, establishing himself quite successfully with accounts such as Texaco, B.F. Goodrich, and Alcoa Aluminum.

The Final Awakening

In the winter of 1955, Link loaded up his cameras and drove out of icy New York and headed down to Staunton, a small city in the belly of the Valley of Virginia. An advertising agency had him on assignment to shoot a photo layout at a Westinghouse factory there. With some time to spare, he decided to drive to nearby Waynesboro, Va., to see one of N&W's passenger trains go through. All of N&W's trains were still steam-powered at a time when most railroads with which Link was familiar had converted to diesel.

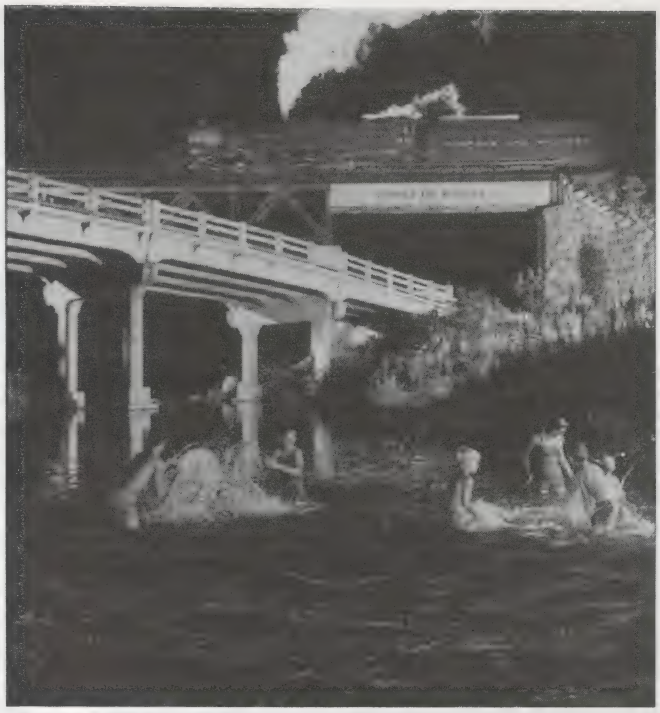
He walked about the old railroad yard, aware of the timeworn station and its

O. Winston Link

"Sometimes the Electricity Fails," Vesuvius, Va., August 1956 (with Train No. 2 in the background). Link was always attempting to make his train photos a part of the human drama of everyday life. Here, a storekeeper pumps gas by hand as a great steam engine flies past.

shops. The smell of coal and kerosene filled the air, and aging workmen in overalls, red bandannas, and striped caps hurried about. In the dim glow of a signal lantern, he watched a freight steam out and the clattering arrival of a passenger train. It was the final awakening. Link knew he had to chronicle what was left of the last steam locomotives. He drove back to Staunton and returned the next day to make several photos.

Later from New York, he would mail several finished prints to the N&W main headquarters in Roanoke, Va., with a request for permission to photograph their trains. The railroad concurred, and Link's dream was put in motion with, as he once told a reporter, access to "2,300 miles of track, 450 steam locomotives, and all the employees of the N&W to get the job done." He was even given a key to phone boxes along the twisting and turning line so he could call in for exact times of departures and arrivals.



O. Winston Link

"Hawksbill Creek Swimming Hole," Luray, Va., August 1956. As youngsters splash away during a moonlight dip, a Norfolk & Western freight screams overhead.

The Virginia Creeper

Over the next five years, Link took every opportunity to drive back to Virginia, spending anywhere from one week to three each trip. It became a labor of love, financed solely out-of-pocket, requiring invention and genius precision. His creations use mountains and valleys and towns as a mighty stage, whereon come all the actors and trains and things — all this in the flaring veil of night. One at a time, he created over 2,250 black-and-white negatives and 200 color transparencies. He learned as he went, found many warm friendships, and gained world respect.

In the dim glow of a signal lantern, he watched a freight steam out and the clattering arrival of a passenger train. It was the final awakening. Link knew he had to chronicle what was left of the last steam locomotives.

In 1983, researcher Carolyn Carr wrote in *Ghost Trains*, a catalog published in conjunction with a 1983 exhibit of some of Link's work by the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Va., that "Link did not work like a street photographer, grabbing images from the unsuspecting; nor was he a Margaret Mead documenting the tribal habits of an exotic and alien culture. For Link, these people are family and friends." Indeed, Link always made it a point to name individuals in most of his work. That is simply one more important element that helps keep his work personal and timeless.

Some of Link's photographs were made in daylight, usually because of the particular location and its importance to everyday life. He was especially drawn to areas along the N&W's Abingdon Branch, a southwest spur from out of the highlands of Abingdon, Va., to West Jefferson, N.C. In some places along this naturally scenic mountainous route, a person walking fast could keep up with a long freight, earning the spur its nickname, the "Virginia Creeper." One of Link's favorite shots was made along the route in 1956. He titled it "Maud Bows to the Virginia Creeper." It was shot in late fall at a little station called Green Cove.

In his 1995 book, *The Last Steam Railroad in America,* Link calls that particular photograph "one of the most serene and beautiful pictures I ever made." Few would disagree. And although he is retired now and somewhat disabled, Link still leaves his Mt. Kisco, N.Y., home to make appearances at his exhibits whenever possible to try to explain the serenity one single camera shot can capture forever.

Trains Passing in the Night

But it's the night photos that haunt the eye. Each is like a single story in itself, compelling long and deep studies to satisfy the mind that it didn't miss something. Overall, Link preferred shooting at night. "You can't control the sun," he once chided a reporter. So he created his own suns and scattered them across the darkness. The trains obliged with gleaming metal, white ghostly smoke, shadowy steam, and glowing headlamps.

It's the night photos that haunt the eye.

Underlying each imaged story is another story of patience, long waiting hours, uncertainty, and expense. Link's reward, in addition to all the public accolades, must be the personal pride that comes from knowing his work blurs the fine line that separates ordinary photography from genuine art. But even now, he'll tell you he just wanted to shoot good pictures of trains.

It wasn't until the mid-1970s that Link seriously brought his work to a large and appreciative audience through publication of some of his photos in various railroad magazines. And it was nearly 10 more years — in 1983 — before his first exhibit at Norfolk, Va.'s Chrysler Museum. For those who love old trains, they probably felt much the same as poetry connoisseurs had felt when unknown manuscripts of Emily Dickinson were found in an attic. Young and old alike were ready: the old because they remembered and the young because they wished they could.

O. Winston Link

"Maud Bows to the Virginia Creeper," Green Cove, Va., October 1956, was Link's personal favorite. The Green Cove station, now restored and part of the Virginia Creeper Trail, is only a few miles from the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains reached by a scheduled passenger train. The "Creeper" carried both freight and passengers out of Abingdon, Va., into North Carolina.

Beginning this year and continuing on through the year 2000, Link's exhibition, "Trains That Pass in the Night," is traveling across most of America to be shown in museums from Nebraska to California. But ironically, it will travel by ribbons of highway — and not over train tracks now forgotten or removed. To many who appreciate his work, that seems a shame.

It finally comes back to Thomas Wolfe, who must have ridden across Virginia one dark night in the sleeper of a fast passenger train. Indeed, Wolfe puts a final face on what O. Winston Link surely felt every time he lit up the sky and clicked the shutter. "He cannot think he has ever lived there in the far lost hills," wrote Wolfe, "or even left them, and all his life seems stranger than the dream of time, and the great train moves on across the immense and lonely visage of America, making its great monotone that is the sound of silence and forever." N&T

Currently living in Martinsville, Va., Edward J. Myers is a free-lance writer with credits in numerous publications, ranging from National Parks *to* Highlights for Children. *A historical western novel,* The Hiders, *is forthcoming.*

Trains That Pass in the Night
An Exhibit of the Photography of O. Winston Link

Organized by the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Thomas H. Garver, guest curator

January 12 - March 14, 1999
Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, Tex.

April 13 - June 13, 1999
Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio.

July 13 - September 19, 1999
Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, S. C.

October 15 - November 26, 1999
Cantor-Fitzgerald Gallery, Haverford, Pa.

January 11 - March 12, 2000
New York State Museum, Albany, N.Y.

April 18 - June 18, 2000
Sordoni Art Gallery, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

August 20 - November 5, 2000
Stanford Museum of Art, Stanford, Calif.

Green Cove Stop
(to O. Winston Link)

In the photo
a panting train —
child's toy —
makes the stop
while a white horse,
Ole Maud,
dips and bows.

Body harnessed,
flanks veined,
head tossed
toward the camera —
like she's listening
to water
I know runs below.

Soon, two-part
whistle, slow
clank of iron rods,
harsh stack-chuffs
and long climb to
White Top: three miles,
three percent up.

Green Cove station
stands hard but
the core is gone:
mail, telegraph, ticket
window, train track;
ligaments to
Abingdon and beyond.

Inside, ghosts of
numberless bottled Cokes,
racked to save
the deposit;
shirt collars;
postage stamps; the
War Department telegram.

Above Green Cove —
rutted, rail-less path
curves to White Top.
Bridge timbers weather;
bolts rust; old ties,
cast down the bank,
rot to brown shards.

— Tony Reevy

Tony Reevy is director of library development at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. He has over 30 publications including poetry, short fiction, and nonfiction. His book Ghost Trains, *a compendium of American railroad ghost legends, has just been released by TLC Publishing. Reevy lives in Durham, N.C., with his wife, Caroline, and daughter, Lindley.*

Cadillac Summer

by Rebecca Phillips

None of us would ever have used the word foolish in the same breath with the name Lloyd Spoon or, for that matter, with that of his wife, Vida, either. They'd been married forty years, looking now like brother and sister, the way couples will after that long, him a little stouter, both with a full head of hair gone to gray. And fine, fine people. But we agreed, to a man, that the way they were about that car, the Cadillac the Upton sisters gave him, beat all you ever saw — Lloyd more than Vida, in the beginning.

It was love, I guess, and love is always a mystery to us, isn't it? How some poor woman we know puts up with her husband, who spends more time in town drinking with his buddies than at home or what some other man sees in a nagging wife. And I've known a couple of fellows who loved their hunting dogs better than anything else in this world. Well, this was just another kind of love.

It was a beautiful car, a '53 Cadillac convertible, only three years old when Miss Hazel gave it to Lloyd right before she and Miss Irene left our Kentucky town. It with only 462 miles on it. Maroon with a soft, fawn-colored top you wanted to touch when you saw it. And we have to remember that Lloyd had never driven anything in his sixty years other than a Ford pickup. The one he had then was a good ten years old, yet with many fine years of service left. But it was love with the Cadillac.

Like I said, Lloyd and Vida were as good a people as you'll ever know. By all accounts, Vida had been a pretty girl — thick chestnut hair, eyes to match. She had a truckload of beaus, but the only one she ever cared for was Lloyd Spoon, whose face went red when she looked at him long. He was a hard worker, and so was she. Him a farm boy and her helping her mother with the little brothers and sisters and with the boarding house from the time she was seven or eight, setting the long table, cleaning up afterwards. By the time she was twelve, she and a younger sister did most of the cooking, mountains of fried chicken, pie plates packed with puffy biscuits. Cooking for just Lloyd and herself after they married must have seemed like nothing.

In those first few years, they waited for a gaggle of chestnut-haired children to join them around the table, but Vida miscarried three times. They had pretty much accepted they'd be childless when Lloyd's sister died giving birth to a sweet, moon-faced Mongoloid baby who Lloyd and Vida took in and raised for the six short years of her life. They named her Margaret for her dead mother and gave her Spoon as a last name since her daddy disappeared from the face of the earth after his wife died and the baby wasn't quite right.

Vida had a truckload of beaus, but the only one she ever cared for was Lloyd Spoon, whose face went red when she looked at him long.

They did dote on that little girl. Vida, who was slightly built herself, carrying her around on one hip half the day. As soon as Lloyd was done in the field, he'd want to take her. Many an afternoon, you'd see him holding the child firm in front of him astride their old mule, just riding round and round the yard out back of the house.

Now Vida was highly thought of as a seamstress. She could study a dress in the Sears catalogue or one in a shop window in Elizabethton and make her own pattern out of her head. Dress after dress she made that little girl — fancy, dotted-swiss ones

with puffed sleeves and organdy pinafores — so that every day, Margaret looked like she was on her way to church. They were a bit foolish about her, I guess, but everybody saw why.

The day they buried little Margaret, Vida said they'd always known she was theirs for just a while. Still, both of them looked like sorrow had wrung them dry. They walked around dazed for a couple of months, hardly saying more than "hey" when they met a body on the street, but then they started taking care of other folks. Vida became the first one at a neighbor's door when bad times hit, there with a pot of burgoo. And many a widow woman in town knew Lloyd would be the one to help her when a storm brought a tree down across the driveway or the screens on the upstairs windows needed to come down for cleaning. It was like they had a pocketful of caring left over from little Margaret and needed some place to spend it.

Dress after dress she made that little girl — fancy, dotted-swiss ones with puffed sleeves and organdy pinafores — so that every day, Margaret looked like she was on her way to church.

Across the road and down a piece from the Spoons lived Miss Irene Upton in an old Victorian house, bigger and fancier than the farm houses that dotted the town. She had been the youngest of the Upton children, four boys and one other girl, and the one to stay at home with her parents after high school, while the others went on to bigger, if not better, things. She looked after both her mother and father, him bedridden for the last seven years of his life, until they both died. Then Miss Upton herself became sickly, not so much the kind of illness that requires the hospital but more the kind that means one is careful to avoid doing too much.

So Lloyd took to putting in a small garden for her, just a few tomatoes — she was partial to Big Boys — and cucumbers and a couple of hot pepper plants. Miss Upton had traveled to New Mexico as a young girl and in that two weeks developed a taste, uncommon in Kentucky, for spicy food. As years passed, Lloyd did more and more of the tending of the garden for her, no trouble at all, he'd say, though he himself was only five years younger than Miss Upton. Now and then, Vida might shake her head as she watched him go from their barn and his own long day straight across the street, with a hoe on his shoulder, to another half hour's work. But Vida knew she and Lloyd had blessings Miss Upton lacked, mainly one another, and she didn't begrudge her much.

Vida herself always took a few jars of whatever she canned — pole beans, beets, peaches — over to her. And in the summer, not a week went by that a dish of warm blackberry cobbler or a piece of Vida's lemon meringue pie didn't find its way across the road. But neither of the Spoons ever expected any kind of repayment from Miss Upton. Not for an instant.

One Saturday towards the end of a fine, mild winter — which we all were grateful for — Hazel Owenby, Miss Upton's older sister, appeared, the back seat of her car piled high with things all a-clutter, a chrome coffee pot sparkling from its nest on a yellow chenille bathrobe, a black wrought-iron plant stand jutting out one window. Not two weeks before, she had laid to rest her husband of over forty-five years, a short, gruff man who owned shoe stores in both Lexington and Elizabethton. Word was soon around town that Hazel had fled her own house in Lexington when her two grown daughters descended like vultures on carrion and her still in relatively good health.

By the time she'd been staying with Irene for a month, everyone had taken to calling her Miss Upton too, just like they had years before. Hazel didn't mind letting the Owenby part of her name slide, not so much as a reproach to her dead husband, though she had ceased to be in love with him some fifteen years earlier after his affair with a manicurist in Louisville, but because it was a way to realign herself with what seemed like her true family now.

It was no time at all before both Miss Uptons decided to move to Arizona to a retirement home, partially out of fear that Hazel's daughters, not sated by the pickings at their own parents' house, might swoop into their aunt's, the fact that Hazel and Irene were alive being of little consequence. It was after supper, one late spring day, the sun lingering low in the sky, not quite ready to make way for evening, when Vida walked across the road, a plate with two glistening pieces of chocolate pie in her hands. The crickets were tuning up, and the clean, sharp smell of cut grass was strong enough to make a person giddy at the thought of the season to come. The Miss Uptons sat on the front porch in cane bottom rockers, creaking back and forth.

"We'll be leavin' before the end of the month, Vidy," Miss Hazel announced, while Miss Irene took the pie inside the house.

Vida acted like she was hearing this news for the first time though, in fact, Hoke Smith, who owned and operated the town's only grocery store, had spread this information pretty thoroughly after he heard it from the Upton sisters when delivering their groceries the day before.

Under Lloyd's hands, the gears glided from one to the next, and he drove the three women all over the countryside, smiling to himself like a jockey headed for the winner's circle.

"We'll be goin' to Arizona," Hazel said.

Miss Irene rejoined them, saying, "That's next to New Mexico, you know, where I traveled when I was a girl." Vida nodded, having heard more times than she could count of Miss Upton's trip out West.

"There's a lovely retirement home out there. Lucy Hall's sister-in-law lives there," Hazel went on. "The weather is wonderful — warm, I understand, but not like our heat here." She patted her upper lip with a small handkerchief with tiny rosebuds stitched in the corners to make sure Vida understood the significance of dry heat.

"It'll seem awful funny not to have you here with us, Miss Upton," Vida said to Miss Irene. Then she turned to add, "Oh, and you too, Miss Hazel."

"Thank you, Vidy. Lord knows, I've always wanted to go back out West, ever since my trip to New Mexico. I think Hazel and I'll be quite happy there," Miss Irene said.

Vida couldn't tell if Miss Irene really believed that or not. Her eyes took on a faraway look, but it was hard to tell if she was looking ahead or to the past. It was clear the decision had been made, though.

> The car was like a giant pebble dropped into the vast unstirred pools of their imaginations, making all sorts of new things possible.

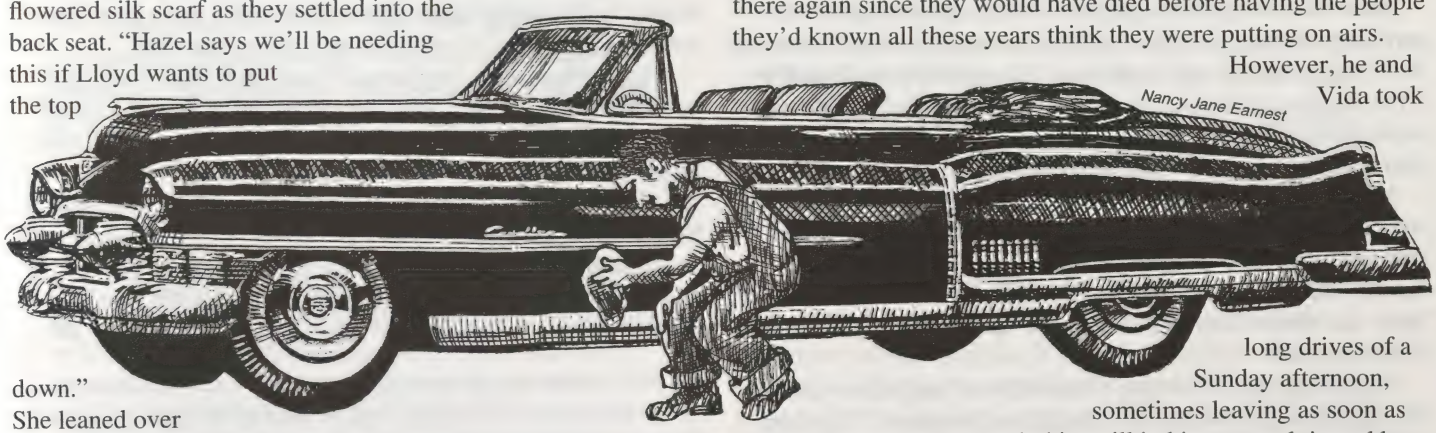
"We're leavin' the house to the town," Miss Irene said. "The Mayor came out yesterday and talked for a good long time with Hazel and me about what we need to do to deed it over. It will be the Leon and Virginia Upton Library, named for Mama and Daddy." Both the sisters dabbed at their eyes then. Vida, whose reading was confined to her Sunday School lesson and the *Reader's Digest,* agreed this would be a wonderful thing, particularly for the children in town.

"And I," Miss Hazel said, "want to give my car to Lloyd."

Vida started to protest, but Hazel went on. "In Arizona, we'll take our meals in a central dining hall, not a hop, skip, and a jump from our apartment. And Lucy Hall's sister-in-law says the van comes from the First Methodist Church every Sunday. What more could a body want?"

Later, Lloyd, blushing mightily, agreed to accept the car, but not until after sincere protests of his own.

The Sunday before the sisters boarded the train for Arizona, Lloyd tried the car out, Miss Hazel up front with him to explain various niceties about the vehicle, while Vida and the other Miss Upton rode in the back. Miss Irene handed Vida a fuchsia flowered silk scarf as they settled into the back seat. "Hazel says we'll be needing this if Lloyd wants to put the top down."


Nancy Jane Earnest

She leaned over closer and whispered, "She said Mr. Owenby was forever wanting to put the top down. She said it makes your hair look like it was combed with an egg beater."

Miss Hazel admitted she had not driven the car all that much, just to the A&P and meetings of her garden club and church circle. Of course, she always had several passengers, she said, being the only lady driver among her acquaintances. And she'd always thought the gear shift was a little hard to get into reverse, though her husband, Mr. Owenby, kept assuring her it would loosen up with time. It hadn't seemed to, but she had avoided that gear with just a little planning as far as parking went.

The torturous trip from Lexington to her sister's house was the furthest she'd ever driven, she told them, and had she not been so alarmed at the behavior of her two daughters, she never would have come that far. Boarding the train would be, to her anyway, just this side of mounting the stairway to heaven. Under Lloyd's hands, the gears glided from one to the next, and he drove the three women all over the countryside, smiling to himself like a jockey headed for the winner's circle.

Lloyd was far more taken with the car than anyone, even Vida, could have foretold. He parked the Cadillac at the end of the driveway in back of the house, moving his pickup down closer to the road, a good thirty yards from the new car. The Cadillac struck him as a car that needed to be cared for, that expected to be pampered, to be groomed over and over with a soft cloth along its flanks. So, on the summer nights when darkness didn't fall 'til nine o'clock, he'd be out there with that car, brushing the top, stroking the sides, acting like it had a heart and soul just as much as he did.

Sometimes Vida would stand at the kitchen window watching him, happy because he was happy, like you are when you watch a child's excitement over Christmas being close or the fair coming to town.

He drove it a couple of Sundays to church. There were three or four other fancy cars parked in the field beside the Calvary Baptist Church, no other convertibles, of course. For the most part, pickups and more modest cars, Chevrolets and Fords, gathered there. Perhaps a head or two turned and stared a little longer than usual when they drove up, surely no one said anything, most folks knowing the Spoons didn't have an uppity bone between them. But soon, Lloyd started driving the truck there again since they would have died before having the people they'd known all these years think they were putting on airs.

However, he and Vida took long drives of a Sunday afternoon, sometimes leaving as soon as they got home from church, him still in his coat and tie and her in a Sunday dress. They drove in ever-widening circles, beyond where they were likely to see a familiar face — all the way to Munfordville where they ate at Wong's Palace, discovering they liked Chinese food. Other times they had a quick bite at home after church, then rode over to Harrisboro and saw a matinee at

the movie theater. Or they just rode around with the top down. Lloyd said it was important not to let the mechanism get stiff. Vida suspected he just liked the touch of the wind on his face and in his hair, so she tied the scarf Miss Irene had given her tightly under her chin and gripped the side of the seat with her right hand so Lloyd couldn't see it and said, "Put it down, brother."

She loved the light that danced in Lloyd's eyes on these drives as much as the adventures themselves. Not that they could not have done these very same things all these years in Lloyd's pickup, but it hadn't occurred to them or, if it had, it seemed frivolous, while in the Cadillac, it was the very thing to do. The car was like a giant pebble dropped into the vast unstirred pools of their imaginations, making all sorts of new things possible. Maybe more than possible, maybe necessary.

For their anniversary in early August, they drove all the way to Louisville and spent the night at the Brown Hotel after having a steak dinner in the hotel's restaurant. The hotel had been highly recommended to everyone in town by Doc Davenport, who had attended a dentists' convention there the year before.

A few people said because the whole summer had been like a storybook for Lloyd and Vida, them off gallivanting in the Cadillac like it was the queen's carriage, it made things worse for her later. But most of us knew the change in her was just because they'd been so close, the two of them without children to siphon off some of their devotion.

She found him one evening crumbled between the rows of corn, his eyes unblinking, fixed on the sky. Her own knees buckled under her, and she sat there amidst the stalks, dazed for what seemed like the longest time, though later she could not have told if it was ten minutes or two hours.

She didn't seem quite herself then. Those of us who had benefited from her goodness over the years tried to return the favor by marching plates of food to the back door and helping her with things, like bringing in the last of the garden.

More than two or three people coveted the rich half dozen acres surrounding the house, and they wasted no time in asking her if she wanted to sell it off now. She quickly leased most of it for next-to-nothing to Vance Copeland, a shirttail cousin who worked night and day but could barely stay ahead since each year brought a tiny new mouth to his family.

Miss Irene Upton wrote her saying, "Hazel and I know you would love Arizona as much as we do. There is a color television here, and we play canasta once a week and bingo three times." Vida, perhaps because she had never traveled to the West, did not feel drawn to it now, and games had never interested her much.

After Miss Upton's letter, Vida began to worry about the car, though. What if Miss Hazel's daughters came back? They had stormed into town only once after the Upton sisters departed and were so wrought up over the deeding away of Miss Irene's house that they seemed to have forgotten the Cadillac altogether. What if they heard that Lloyd had passed away? The car had been given to him, really, not to her since she had never driven a day in her life.

So often when she thought of Lloyd now, which must have been most of the time, she pictured him standing beside the Cadillac, polishing it with an old kitchen towel, or she saw his face the way it looked during their jaunts around the countryside. Perhaps it was because of the way she had found him in the field, but she couldn't bear to remember him working the farm, even though that was how he had spent most of his hours in the many years of their marriage. She didn't think she could stand it if Hazel's girls came to take away the Cadillac.

She loved the light that danced in Lloyd's eyes on these drives as much as the adventures themselves.

She also began to worry that the car was not being taken care of in the same way it had been when Lloyd was living. She started sweeping out invisible dirt from the seats and the floor mats and shining the body of the car, polishing every inch of it, just as she had seen him do. In the middle of the fall, when the last of the plums rained down in a thunderstorm leaving crimson stains on the soft fawn top, she cried as hard as she had in the cornfield that day.

No one ever knew what gave her the idea to bring the car inside, but no one, as far as we knew, ever tried to talk her out of it. Vance, the cousin who leased the land, gathered up ten men one Saturday, and we took to dismantling one side of the house. Before noon, we had taken out a bank of windows and the boards below them and had drained the fluids out of the car. By the time the sun set, Vida's dining room had the Cadillac in the same spot where a gateleg table had been. We moved the table and the four chairs into another room but left the china cabinet with all Vida's carnival glass and iridescent plates catty-corner where it was, along with a little table that held her African violets.

When we left that evening, the paint was drying on the boards, and standing back to look at our work, we agreed that you couldn't much tell what had taken place that day.

Vida seemed to recover herself some after that. Those who had brought food after Lloyd died found themselves on the receiving end of plates of Vida's fudge at Christmastime. Vance plowed a little patch for her near the house in the spring, and she tends it herself to keep busy as much as anything, I guess. No one raises an eyebrow any more about the car in the dining room, though you'll hear a tale now and then about Vida sitting in it eating a meal. I don't much believe that myself, but even if it's true, what's the difference? Love is always a mystery. N&T

Rebecca Phillips lives in Knoxville, Tenn., where she has traded the joys and challenges of teaching high school English for the challenges and joys of rearing three boys. Her short stories have appeared in various literary and small magazines including Appalachian Heritage, Skylark *(from Purdue University),* Words of Wisdom, *and* descant *(from Texas Christian University). Phillips is recipient of first place in the Leslie Garrett Short Story Contest, sponsored by the Knoxville Writers' Guild, and the Tennessee Mountain Writers' Short Fiction Contest.*

News CASS

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Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

In this issue — **Winter 1998**

- Spotlight on graduate students
- Archives 20th Anniversary
- Bristol Named Birthplace of Country Music

Scottish Director Visits ETSU

Margaret Mackay, director of the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, recently concluded a week-long visit to the campus of East Tennessee State University. Born in Canada of Scottish heritage, Mackay received her B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of Toronto, and her Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh in Scottish folklore. She worked at the School of Scottish Studies as a research fellow and lecturer in Scottish Ethnology for more than 20 years. Since 1993, Mackay has served as the director of the School of Scottish Studies.

Mackay's itinerary included meetings with ETSU Appalachian Studies faculty and students, with whom she discussed research opportunities in Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and Appalachia, and how to implement them. She also met with university officials to reaffirm the exchange agreement between the University of Edinburgh and ETSU, and to discuss new programs.

Planned for 1999 is a new link between the Continuing Studies programs of the two institutions, which will include a trip to Scotland similar to the one currently operated for traditional students by ETSU's Appalachian-Scottish and Irish Studies program.

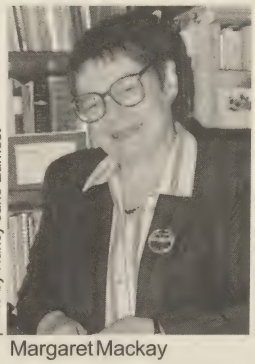

photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Margaret Mackay

Mackay also traveled to Western Carolina University where she presented a program on Scottish identity. While there, she met with a representative of an Atlanta museum that is planning an exhibit on tartans during 1999. Back at ETSU, Mackay provided information about the links between ETSU and the University of Edinburgh to the radio audience of "ETSU Voices," hosted by Fred Sauceman on WJCW. After providing this service, she lectured to a very receptive audience at ETSU's D. P. Culp University Center on the topic "National Identity in Scotland." Mackay was also honored with a reception at Shelbridge, home of ETSU President and Mrs. Paul E. Stanton.

To end her week of hard work at ETSU, Mackay met with representatives of several regional colleges, including Radford University, Warren Wilson College, Southwest Virginia Community College, Western Carolina University and others, to discuss consortial arrangements in support of Scottish and Irish studies which would be of benefit to both cultures.

Spotlight on Graduate Students

The Center is fortunate to have the services and skills of a host of ETSU graduate students who provide valuable assistance to our various divisions. Throughout this issue of *NewsCASS*, you will find articles about each one of these fine students who perform so many vital tasks for each of the various units of the Center. The entire CASS staff extends our **THANKS** to all our graduate students.

Spotlight on . . .

Shauna McDonald is the graduate assistant for Appalachian-Scottish and Irish Studies. She is from Spartanburg, in upstate South Carolina, and is enrolled in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program where she focuses on Appalachian-Scottish and Irish Studies. McDonald's hobby is playing the great highland bagpipes and the shuttlepipes. She has an uncle who also plays the pipes, and this helped her pick up the playing. For bagpipe players, instructors are not common in the U.S., but in East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia, there is a concentration of good players who offer more opportunities to learn. McDonald's next mission is to learn to play *piobaireachd* (pee-brock) which is the "high" style (*ceol mor* or formal) piping. Instead of a supplied tempo, the player uses her heartbeat to keep time. The music is prescribed, and, like jazz, begins with a steady grounded piece followed with variations of the ground (but not variations by the players) and back to the grounded piece to finish.

NewsCASS, the joint newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services (Archives of Appalachia, Reece Museum, and Regional Resources Institute) at East Tennessee State University, is published three times a year. Center and FORM members receive *NewsCASS* as part of the benefits of membership.

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Jane Harris Woodside, Asst. Director & Editor, *Now & Then*

Oxendine Named Managing Editor of *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*

Jill Oxendine of Johnson City, Tenn., recently joined the Center as managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. Oxendine is an experienced writer and editor, working in the past for industry, advertising agencies, educational institutions, and newspapers. Most recently, Oxendine was editor of *Storytelling Magazine*, the international publication of the National Storytelling Association, headquartered in Jonesborough, Tenn. In 1994, Oxendine served as guest editor for *Now & Then*. Winner of numerous awards for her publication work, Oxendine brings expertise and enthusiasm to the *Encyclopedia* project.

photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Jill Oxendine

Archives Temporarily Closed

The Archives of Appalachia will be closed from November 25, 1998, through January 22, 1999, to facilitate moving into its new home. During this period, no archival materials or services will be available. The archives will reopen in the new university library on Monday, January 25, 1999.

Congress Declares Bristol the Birthplace of Country Music

On October 9, 1998, the U. S. Congress passed a resolution declaring Bristol, Tenn.-Va., the **Birthplace of Country Music**. With the passage of the resolution, the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance (BCMA) has announced a task force, led by Center director Jean Haskell Speer, to develop a strategic plan for music heritage initiatives in the region for the next decade. Additionally, in support of the work of the task force, the Center has received a special state appropriation through the leadership of state Sen. Ron Ramsey.

Sponsors of the legislation were Rep. Bill Jenkins, R-Tenn., and Rep. Rick Boucher, D-Va., and co-sponsors were the entire Tennessee and Virginia congressional delegations. The news brought joy to members of BCMA, a regional association based in Bristol, Tenn.-Va., of individuals and groups devoted to conserving and promoting the rich musical heritage of southern Appalachia.

For information about the task force or about the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, please contact the Center at 423-439-5348.

Center Undertakes Park History Project

The Center has received two grants totaling $61,000 from the National Park Service to conduct a two-year project. Ed Speer, archives assistant, will research and write an administrative history of the Blue Ridge Parkway and prepare an historic resource study of the area surrounding the Humpback Rocks Farm on the Parkway near Staunton, Va. Jean Haskell Speer, Center director, will serve as principal investigator on the project. Gene Cox, former chief of interpretative and visitor services for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Gibson Worsham, an architect from Christiansburg, Va., will serve as consultants on the project.

Spotlight on . . .

Bluegrass and Country Music enjoys the services of **Thomas Sneed**. Sneed is from Oklahoma by way of the "Big Sky" country of Montana; he is a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies student, and is studying bluegrass music. Hired under an agreement with the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance (BCMA) to produce a bluegrass discography, he applied for a $45,000 grant from the Recording Arts Academy (who award the Grammys) to help with production and distribution of the discography. On a six-country tour in eastern Europe, Sneed met a banjo player, Petr Brandes, who recommended ETSU as the center of bluegrass in America.

photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Thomas Sneed

Although Sneed plays mandolin and writes songs, he sees himself more as a singer. A member of the ETSU Bluegrass Band, Sneed performed at the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) annual convention concert in Louisville, Ky., before an audience of thousands and broadcast over 300 radio stations in 11 countries. Sneed and Martha Scanlan, on guitar, produced a CD for their band, "Engine 143," which was produced in Nashville at Jasonics Studios. He and Scanlan recently performed a Farm and Fun Time radio program re-creation at Northeast State Technical Community College. Upon graduation, Sneed wants to pursue a career in folklore and play professionally part time. He enjoys classic bluegrass radio and searching the archives for songs. Beyond A.P. Carter, his music heroes are too numerous to list.

Springtime Exhibits at the Reece Museum

Towers: A Photographic Essay
by J. William Rudd

January 8 - February 28, 1999
Gallery talk and reception -
January 21, 4 p.m.

J. William Rudd, professor of architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, presents a photographic view of "towers." According to Rudd, "Towers have historically commanded attention and respect, even reverence, as reflections of a culture's values. From campanile to capital, skyscrapers to mountains, towers have invoked importance and control while evoking a sense of inspiration and awe. They have, in other words, presented that compelling sense of power connecting the psycho-physical worlds of image and meaning to the practical and symbolic roles of building objects. This photographic essay explores four aspects of that connection through the themes of faith, nature, culture, and commerce."

Rudd will present a gallery talk at 4 p.m. on Thursday, January 21; a reception will follow.

Contemporary Chinese Art
by Christine Kou

January 8 - February 28, 1999

Kuansoi (Christine) Wong Kou is a well-known Atlanta-based Chinese artist who spent her early years working as a commercial artist in Macau. She moved to Atlanta, Ga., in 1988 and is a member of the Artist Association of Atlanta and the Georgia Watercolor Society.

Buddha, by Christine Kou

Kou's work has been exhibited in the Macau Museum, and the Tai-Chong Culture Center in Taiwan, among others. Her work has been acquired by collectors in Macau, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Canada, South Africa, Portugal, and the United States.

African Art
from the Henry and Susan Antkiewicz Collection

January 15 - February 28, 1999
Gallery talk and reception - February 25, 4 p.m.

Henry and Susan Antkiewicz lived in Zambia for more than nine years while Henry taught at the Zambian University. During that time, they amassed a collection of masks, baskets, bowls, and other traditional art forms from Zambia. Henry is an associate professor in ETSU's department of history, and also serves as Director of the Office of International Programs at ETSU. Susan and Henry have been long-time members of Friends of the Reece Museum (FORM), and Susan has served as president and as chair of FORM's membership and development committee.

Henry Antkiewicz will present a slide lecture and gallery talk on Thursday, February 25, at 4 p.m.; a reception will follow.

Affinities with Architecture, a travelling multimedia exhibition

March 4 - April 20, 1999
reception and gallery talk - April 15, 2 p.m.

On loan from the Ewing Gallery of Art and Architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, the travelling exhibit *Affinities with Architecture* is the latest in a series of thematic exhibits organized by the Ewing Gallery. According to Sam Yates, curator and director of the Ewing Gallery, "History is resplendent with examples of artists interested in architecture. An objective in organizing *Affinities with Architecture* was not to portray these artists as architects, but to exhibit work by those who utilize certain materials, elements, and processes associated with architecture and those who bring into question the spiritual, social, and environmental impact that architecture has on our world."

The exhibit includes prints, paintings, drawings, photographs, and mixed media works. Artists included are Mark Bennett, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Jacqueline Bishop, New Orleans, La.; Barry Buxkamper, Nashville, Tenn.; Ying Kit Chan, Louisville, Ky.; Patrick Dougherty, Chapel Hill, N.C.; James Edwards, Columbia, S.C.; Cheryl Goldsleger, Athens, Ga.; Cathryn Griffin, Cullowhee, N.C.; Peter Lenzo, Columbia, S.C.; Larry Millard (an ETSU alum), Athens, Ga.; Herb Parker, Charleston, S.C.; and Greg Shelnutt, Oxford, Miss.

Sam Yates will present a gallery talk on Thursday, April 15 at 2 p.m.; a reception will follow.

Reece Museum Announces New Hours

Beginning January 1999, the Reece Museum will alter gallery hours as follows:

Mon. - Wed. & Fri.	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thur.	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sat. & Sun.	1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Please be Seated, an invitational exhibit

March 11 - April 18, 1999
design competition and reception - March 12, 6 p.m.

The chair. We use them every day but infrequently consider the design and construction of these ubiquitous objects. The Reece will take a closer look at "seating" with examples of finely crafted chairs made by craftspeople in the region. Our invitational exhibit will feature the work of Jonesborough, Tenn., resident Curtis Buchanan; Arval Woody, Spruce Pine, N.C.; and Lyle Wheeler, Miller's Creek, N.C., among others.

Windsor Chair
by Curtis Buchanan

In conjunction with this exhibit, the Museum will host Northeast Tennessee's first **Incredible Edible Chair Design Competition** scheduled for Friday, March 12. The competition, sponsored by the local chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), will invite entries constructed entirely of edible items. According to Rebecca Larys, chair of the competition committee, "**The Incredible, Edible Chair Design Competition** is guaranteed to be a remarkable culinary adventure; any edible material may be used, but entries will lose points if non-edible materials (i.e., toothpicks) are included." Jurors for the competition will be museum staff. Any entry that melts, rots, disintegrates, or collapses will be disqualified and discarded. Guests may not nibble on entries.

For additional information concerning the competition, contact Rebecca Larys at P.O. Box 5038, Kingsport TN 37663 or telephone her at 423-224-0160.

Spotlight on . . .

Elizabeth (Libby) Post, from Elizabethton, Tenn., with a B.S. in history from ETSU, is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Teaching (Elementary Education) program. Post's duties in the Archives of Appalachia are primarily to organize the extensive collection donated by former Rep. James H. (Jimmy) Quillen (R-Tenn., 1963-1997).

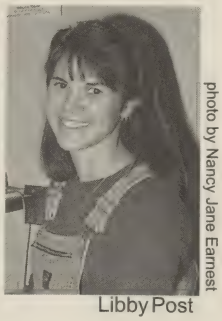


photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Libby Post

Working with Ned Irwin, university archivist, Archives of Appalachia, Post established a working series list and began evaluating materials in the unprocessed boxes to determine which best fit into each series. The next step will be to provide a detailed cataloging of each box; this is her current task. Being from the district, Post has heard a great deal about Quillen's work serving Tennessee's 1st Congressional District, and the collection has increased her appreciation of his position in the region. Post plans to teach in the elementary grades and remain in East Tennessee.

"FOCIS" on Community Service

The recent donation of the records of the Federation of Communities in Service (FOCIS) to the Archives of Appalachia enhances the department's strong emphasis on research materials related to "grassroots" social organizations in the southern Appalachian region. "The FOCIS records hold an important part of the story of this region," said Norma Myers, archives curator. "They are a valuable addition to the holdings of the Archives of Appalachia, especially for documenting grassroots organizations working to improve life in Southern Appalachia."

Organized out of the work of the Glenmary Sisters (an order of Catholic nuns), FOCIS has sought to improve the social condition of residents living in Virginia and other portions of the southern Appalachian region. The previously dispersed records were recently gathered in preparation for a history project about the organization. The records cover the period 1967-1998. The collection includes books, recorded interviews, pamphlets, newsclippings, and other printed ephemera, and documents the history and ongoing operations of FOCIS.

1999 Appalachian Fiction Competition

Now & Then magazine is pleased to announce the 1999 Appalachian Fiction Competition. Robert Morgan — writer of poetry, short fiction, and novels — has agreed to serve as the final judge. A native of Henderson County, N.C., Morgan is currently a professor of English at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. Originally establishing his reputation as a first-rate poet, Morgan began publishing volumes of fiction in 1989, beginning with a short story collection, *The Blue Valleys*. He later produced another volume of short fiction, *The Mountains Won't Remember Us*, in 1992 and two novels, *The Hinterlands* in 1994 and in 1995, *The Truest Pleasure*.

Submissions for *Now & Then's* Appalachian Fiction Competition must be postmarked no later than March 1, 1999. All entries must be written by authors from or currently living in Appalachia, the region stretching along the mountain chain from southern New York state to northern Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. In addition to receiving cash prizes, writers will have their winning stories published in the summer 1999 "Appalachian Lives" issue of *Now & Then*, which will focus on autobiographies and biographies; all entries must tie into the theme of that issue.

Complete guidelines have been posted on the Center's web site at http://cass.etsu.edu/n&t/contest.htm. You may also obtain guidelines by writing to "*Now & Then's* Appalachian Fiction Competition," CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556 or by calling 423-439-5348.

Archives of Appalachia Celebrates 20th Anniversary

With research materials in its care dating from the 18th century, the Archives of Appalachia celebrates its own growing maturity during the 1998-99 academic year with the 20th anniversary of its founding. To help mark this event, a reception and program, "An Appalachian Tapestry: Celebrating Art and Archives" was held at the museum on October 23 as a part of Homecoming Week.

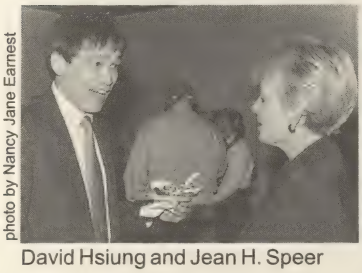


photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

David Hsiung and Jean H. Speer

David Hsiung, history professor at Juniata College, Juniata, Penn., and a long-time user of many of those 18th century archival records, was the program's featured speaker. Hsiung's recent book, *Two Worlds in the Tennessee Mountains: Exploring the Origins of Appalachian Stereotypes* (University Press of Kentucky, 1997) drew on research he conducted in the Archives of Appalachia.

The late Kathryn Wilson, the archives' first secretary, was honored with a memorial plaque and framed photograph which will be hung in the archives' reading room in the new university library facility. Richard Kesner, the archives' founding director, who was unable to attend the event, sent a message of congratulations which was read during the reception.

News & Notes on the Web

News & Notes has gone online. This bi-weekly newsletter has been produced for the last several years by the Center and distributed mainly to readers in and around Johnson City, Tenn. Each issue contains up-to-the-minute information about Center programs, events, classes, exhibits, and more as well as more general information about conferences, meetings, publications, and other items of interest to people involved in regional studies. You can find *News & Notes* at http://cass.etsu.edu/cass/News&Notes.htm. If you would like to submit a news item for consideration, e-mail editor Cheryl Pleasant at NandN@etsu.edu, call the Center at 423-439-5348, or write News & Notes, CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556.

Spotlight on . . .

Declan Fahy is from Castle Creevey, Corrandulla (near Galway), Ireland, and is a graduate student in the College of Applied Science and Technology with a specialty in design graphics and animation as a way of testing new products. He works in the Archives of Appalachia designing the database for collection storage and organization and assisting patrons with digitizing photographs brought into the Archives.

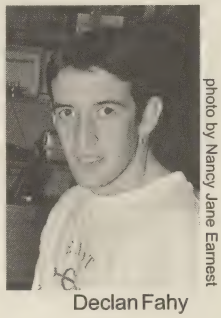


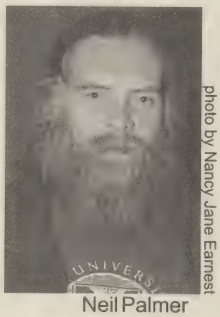
photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Declan Fahy

Fahy earned his undergraduate degree at ETSU where he attended on a track scholarship, running for Coach Dave Walker's legendary "Irish Brigade." However, when Fahy arrived here he found the Tennessee "hills" steeper than the hills he had experienced back home. He has participated in numerous track meets for both ETSU and as a professional runner, but prefers to sing and play the tin whistle, bodrán (Irish drum), or button squeeze box. Back home, his dad operates a small farm and raises dry-stock and horses; Fahy's mother is a part-time nurse.

Spotlight on . . .

Neil Palmer, from Edinburgh, Scotland, is enrolled in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, using lyrics and ballads to study the cultural transfer from Scotland to Appalachia. Ballads form a distinct path back to Scotland through the large-scale Scottish and Ulster Scots migrations into the Carolinas in the 1760s. Palmer's primary source of information is the Archives of Appalachia, in particular the works collected by Tom Burton and Ambrose Manning. The ballads are available for study because they have survived longer in this region than in other parts of North America. The reason, Palmer says, is that larger cities tend to have faster moving cultures as opposed to the rural areas that tend to retain older cultures.



Neil Palmer

Palmer was awarded a scholarship from the St. Andrews Society of New York for one academic year and chose ETSU primarily for the connection between the Center and the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh. Palmer studied Scottish ethnology at the School and will return there for his Ph.D. work.

Regional Cooperation Task Force Reports to Governors

Governor Don Sundquist of Tennessee and Governor Jim Gilmore of Virginia established a task force of regional leaders in the spring of 1998 to consider ways to enhance the economic competitiveness and quality of life in the contiguous mountain region of both states.

According to Center director Jean Haskell Speer, a member of the task force, "the work of our group and the regional leadership it represents is exciting and encouraging. Regional vision and the sharing of resources across the region has to be the hallmark of Appalachia's future."

The task force groups met numerous times and prepared a report for the governors. Addressing such issues as transportation and tourism, education, technology, quality of life, and other multi-state issues, the report offers recommendations for specific actions to improve interstate and regional cooperation. When the governors endorse the recommendations, the task force will monitor their implementation.

Spotlight on . . .

Karen Lewicki, an M.B.A. student with a special interest in marketing, assists with the on-going fundraising program conducted by the Center. Lewicki has successfully solicited donations for awards funding for the Center's writing competitions. She also wrote a grant to the Tennessee Humanities Council that will enable the Reece Museum to exhibit "American Homespun for the President's House" scheduled for June 1999.

Karen Lewicki

Lewicki has lived in Kingsport, Tenn., for over 20 years. She is working toward a future in development in higher education institutions, and was attracted to ETSU by the caliber of the M.B.A. program.

Membership in the Center . . .

CENTER FOR Appalachian STUDIES AND SERVICES
ETSU

Your benefits of membership are:

Three issues of the Center's magazine, *Now and Then: The Appalachian Magazine* to keep you informed of Appalachian issues and the best in Appalachian writing and photography;

Three issues of the Center's newsletter, *NewsCASS* which publicly acknowledges members' contributions annually; and four issues of the Reece Museum *Calendar*;

Special member rates and discounts on books, recordings, other publications/productions, FORM Discovery Tours, study abroad, conferences, and programs.

Your membership supports:

The Center's multiple programs, publications, and projects in teaching, research, and service in the Appalachian region;

Continued work on the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*;

Exhibitions, receptions, gallery talks, workshops, and other programs;

Acquisition and care of collection items for the Archives of Appalachia and for the Reece Museum.

Other ways to contribute to the Center include:

Scholarships • Fellowships • Memorials and Honor Gifts • Gift memberships • In-kind and special gifts • Bequests • Retirement Plans and IRAs • Gifts of Stocks • Gifts of Archival Materials • Gifts of Art or Historical Artifacts

Membership Levels:

❒	Student (for undergraduate and graduate students)	10.00
❒	Friends/Individual	20.00
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❒	Associates/Supporting	50.00
❒	Partners/Patrons	100.00
❒	Patrons/Sustaining	250.00
❒	Corporate/Benefactor	500.00+

Two-year memberships

(extend your support and save)

❒	Student	15.00
❒	Friends/Individual	35.00

If you are employed by a matching gift company, your gift could be doubled or tripled. A list of participating companies is available from any Center office.

Please designate my membership for:

- ❒ CASS General Fund
- ❒ Archives of Appalachia
- ❒ Country and Bluegrass Music
- ❒ *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*
- ❒ Friends of the Reece Museum
- ❒ Reece Museum
- ❒ Appalachian-Scottish & Irish Studies

❒ Libraries and similar institutions are invited to join as an institutional affiliate at the $25.00 level. Payment enclosed_____ Please bill ____

Thank you for your support. Make checks payable to ETSU/CASS and send to CASS, Box 70556, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614-0556. For further information, call 423-439-5348.

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After Hours Cabaret at the Reece

The Brother Boys — Ed Snodderly and Roger Rasnake — helped kick-off a new series at the Reece on Thursday, November 12, 1998. The Brother Boys own brand of toe-tapping music filled the museum's galleries to the delight of over 100 fans.

After Hours Cabaret at the Reece, featuring the best in regional entertainment, will be presented quarterly. In order to accommodate patrons who enjoy a good live performance at the Reece and are not on campus during the day, the Reece's Cabaret takes place during the early evening hours in an intimate, club-like setting with dinner available for purchase.

The next Cabaret, scheduled for Thursday, March 25, 1999, will feature Rick Simerly and Company playing the best in contemporary jazz intermingled with favorite jazz standards. Simerly, band director at T.A. Dugger Jr. High School, Elizabethton, Tenn., has performed with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, among others. His new CD, *Simple Complexity*, is available throughout the area.

Now & Then Announces Themes for Upcoming Issues

The summer 1999 issue of *Now & Then* will be devoted to **Appalachian Lives.** We are inviting people to send in biographies and memoirs for consideration. They can be from or about people who are famous, infamous, or obscure — just as long as they are from Appalachia and still living here, have moved into the region from another part of the world and made it their home, or are from Appalachia and have left and settled elsewhere. The 1999 Appalachian Fiction Contest winners will be published in this issue. The deadline for Appalachian Lives is **March 1, 1999**.

Now & Then, published by the Center, examines a facet of Appalachian life, past and present, in each of its three issues a year. To request guidelines for writers, reviewers, or illustrators, or to send submissions and written queries write to *Now & Then,* ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556; call 423-439-5348; or e-mail woodsidj@etsu.edu. Guidelines are also available on the web at http://cass.etsu.edu/n&t/guidelin.htm. A sample copy of the magazine is available for $5.

Spotlight on . . .

The Reece Museum is fortunate to have the services of **Bonnie Boochard,** who has undertaken the task of reviewing all the museum's collection photographs. She will ensure that good photographs and negatives (that can be retrieved when needed) are on file.

Boochard graduated last spring with a B.F.A. in photography from ETSU and is an M.F.A. student specializing in printmaking. She is interested in photogravure and ways to use photo-negatives in printmaking. Using her technology minor and building on her work experience, she hopes to become a free-lance artist. Her B.F.A. exhibit was hosted by the Reece Museum, and she recently presented a two-person exhibit at the Johnson City Area Art Council's Fine Arts Gallery with Nancy Jane Earnest of the Reece Museum. Boochard's photography interest stems from a class with professor Mike Smith, department of art and design. She is also interested in the hand-bound books course taught by Anita DeAngelis, also of ETSU's art department. Boochard likes to produce hand-bound books for her own prints or for hand-bound journals. Boochard, who is from Lakeview, Mich. (near Grand Rapids), moved to Kingsport, Tenn., from Kent City, Mich.

photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

Bonnie Boochard

Archives of Appalachia: Selected Recent Acquisitions

APPALACHIAN ALLIANCE RECORDS.
1977-83. 7.1 ft.
Consists of office files, articles, and pamphlets related to the activities of this coalition of organizations which worked on various regional issues, most notably on Appalachian land ownership. Donated by Jim Sessions, New Market, Tenn.

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS RECORDS.
1968-80. 3.5 ft.
Consists of subject files, membership lists, financial records, correspondence, and other miscellaneous records documenting the council's activities in promoting the arts in upper East Tennessee. The council was formerly known as the Tri-Cities Arts Council. Donated by Jay Reece, Dept. of English, ETSU.

A. C. BAILEY COLLECTION.
Undated. 1 audiotape.
Consists of mostly original recorded songs by Arnold Chipper Bailey. Donated by Bailey, Jonesborough, Tenn.

RUSS CALHOUN COLLECTION.
Undated. .9 ft.
Consists of photocopied records related to the people, businesses, and institutions of Butler, Tenn.

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY STAFF SENATE RECORDS.
1973-88. .1 ft. Addition.
Consists of minutes, correspondence, memoranda, and other records documenting the functioning of the ETSU Staff Senate. Transferred by the Cataloging Department, Sherrod Library, ETSU.

MARY WINONA PAYNE PAPERS.
1781-1996. 4 ft. Addition.
Formerly known as the White Family Papers, this addition consists of correspondence, photographs, notebooks, clippings, and miscellaneous documents and ephemera related to Payne's genealogical research on the Bushong, Caldwell, Erwin/Irwin, Murr, Payne, and White families of East Tennessee. Donated by Howard P. Ledbetter, ETSU, for Mary Winona Payne.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MINISTRY RECORDS.
1973-78. 3 ft.
Consists of office files, newsletters, brochures, and other printed ephemera related to the operation of this social activist ecumenical ministry program which served a 150-mile radius of Knoxville, Tenn. Donated by Jim Sessions, New Market, Tenn.

TENNESSEE STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION ETSU CHAPTER RECORDS.
1989-96. .8 ft.
Consists of minutes of meetings and financial records of the campus chapter of the state employees association.

In addition, the archives thanks the following for the recent donations of materials or financial contributions: Thomas G. Burton, Johnson City, Tenn.; Roy Carden, Poulan, Ga.; Hazel Scott Craft, Kingsport, Tenn.; Ray Dellinger, Bakersville, N. C.; William R. Gann, Raytown, Mo.; Helen Hollingsworth, ETSU; Stevan Jackson, ETSU; Dan M. Johnson, ETSU; John L. Kiener, Johnson City, Tenn.; Marie Musgrave, Neodesha, Kan.; Robert Nave, Johnson City, Tenn.; Elizabeth Peters, Gate City, Va.; James H. Quillen, Kingsport, Tenn.; Reece Museum, ETSU; Richard B. Russell Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.; Ginger Hawk Rutherford, Johnson City, Tenn.; Southern Empowerment Project, Maryville, Tenn.; Gary R. Toms, Raytown, Mo.; and Jane Woodside, ETSU.

News CASS

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

Don't forget —

Memberships in the Center make great holiday gifts. Check your list for anyone who might like to receive the benefit of association with CASS and its various components.

Best wishes for the new year.

Center: 423-439-5348 Box 70556
FAX: 423-439-6340
Archives: 423-439-4338 Box 70295
Reece Museum: 423-439-4392 Box 70660

Web addresses:
Center: http://cass.etsu.edu
Archives: http://cass.etsu.edu/archives
Museum: http://cass.etsu.edu/museum

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Johnson City TN 37614-0556

Forward and Address Correction Requested

Take this exit for the scenic route through Appalachia.

The Hillbilly Highway

by Michael Barrick

There are faster ways to travel and more direct routes. But no road in the Appalachians offers a clearer view of the region's people and natural beauty than the "Hillbilly Highway."

Don't mistake it for the wide blue line labeled "Interstate 77" in your *Rand-McNally Road Atlas.* To a point, tagging that four-lane as the "Hillbilly Highway" is justifiable. After all, it does traverse the center of Appalachia. I-77 has also gotten the name because it is the route many hillbillies have taken in search of their fortune.

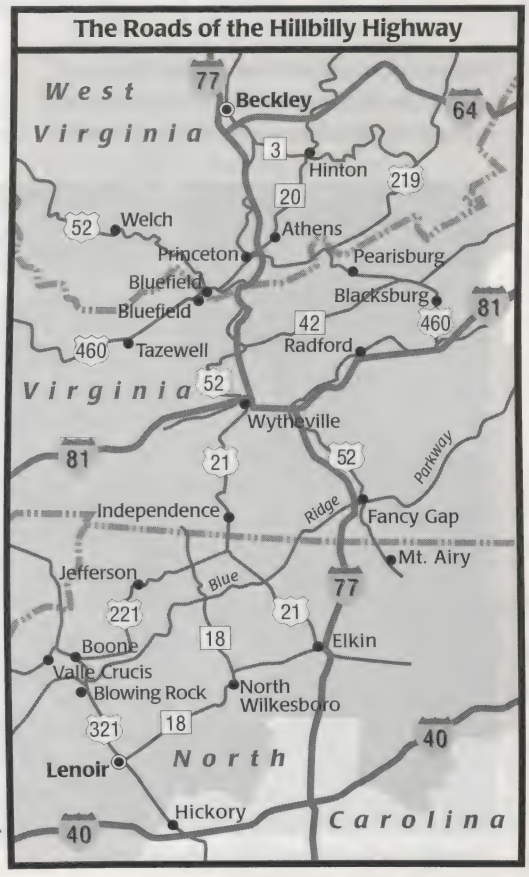
However, it is also a misnomer. That's because the Hillbilly Highway is not a four-lane. The real Hillbilly Highway is more of a strung-together series of state and county route numbers running from just north of the Mason-Dixon line, south to the rolling hills of North Georgia — most paved, some merely improved. It offers a hodgepodge of perspectives on life, just like the people called hillbillies.

An Outlook on Life

Their outlook on life is as unspoiled as the views of the stars on a clear winter night from atop the Blue Ridge Parkway. While the world below is full of folks scrambling at a manic pace, looking in their rearview mirrors at hundreds of others in just as big a hurry to sit stalled in traffic, hillbillies are acutely aware that, as Scripture tells us, "the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desire for other things" are distractions from what is important in life. Such as …

Pickin' and Singin': where music is played simply on stringed instruments as understandable and universal lyrics are sung. When the mandolin plays … well, you're fetched from your troubles into a world of early mornings graced by biscuits, grits, and sausage gravy.

While driving, you can slow down and enjoy life three-dimensionally.



Nancy Fischman, © 1998, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services

Eatin': for breaking bread is a time of intimacy and fellowship. It is a custom that is quickly fading in this age of power lunches.

Courtin' and Child Rearin': because hillbillies have learned that when you can't rely on anyone else, you can count on family. The strong family ties in the hollows of Appalachia, where dark comes early and winter even earlier, bind people together like split rail fences that grow closer over the years.

Preachin' and Prayin': because through good times and bad, we simple mountain folk have learned to rely upon "wisdom from above."

Meandering Roads

Yet hillbillies defy stereotypes. Some drink moonshine. Some make it. Others consider it the devil's brew.

And so, a colorless, high-speed highway cannot fairly describe their life's journey. The true Hillbilly Highway is a collection of meandering mountain roads, joined by a lifestyle that cannot be separated by changes in route numbers.

An example is the stretch from Lenoir, N.C., to Beckley, W.Va. By driving the four-lane, you can make the trip in about three hours. But who would want to when you can drive along the New River Valley instead, taking two-lane narrow roads — which have official route numbers like 18, 221, 21, 52, 20, and 3 — but are really one road?

Along this route, you will see century-old farmhouses still in use. Slow-

Greg Floyd

Roger Hicks.

moving cars head toward the Seed & Feed a block from the town square, where the 150-year-old First Baptist Church still holds Sunday School. Rather than fast food, the town's citizens still enjoy a 2 p.m. Sunday dinner of green beans and corn bread, fried chicken and mashed potatoes — topped off with banana pudding and all washed down with smooth and sweet iced tea.

Hairpin turns promise a panoramic view, while the boarded barns — though bleached gray by time and the elements — nevertheless offer a colorful display for travelers, slowing to negotiate the curves, with murals made up of political signs declaring loyalty to local candidates.

A lone volunteer will occasionally venture out of a lazily grazing herd of cows, clumsily extending her hoof into the chilly brook dividing the pasture. The broad and — here, at least — calm New River sweeps the traveler out of North Carolina and into Grayson County, Va. Soon it abandons you, though, choosing to disappear into the forests downstream to the north. The sojourner, meanwhile, ventures into Independence, Va., entering slowly behind a logging truck. But the leisured pace is welcome as you take in the antebellum courthouse on the town square, surrounded in all directions by inviting brick and frame homes with their neatly clipped deep-green lawns.

The sprawling farms suggest that the day begins before the sun peaks atop the lowest ridge and ends only after the orange glow of the day has faded. Farming is serious here. Barns and silos are tended with as much care as safe deposit boxes at the bank in town.

Traveling on north toward the West Virginia line, the broad farm valleys suddenly give way to steeply banked curves, which run the gauntlet of sheer rock cliffs. Overlooks and parks abound where children can freely clamber over boulders and jump across streams. Majestic views cause you to slow your pace more effectively than a one-lane, orange-barreled, interstate traffic jam. While driving, you can slow down and enjoy life three-dimensionally as a white-tailed deer scampers through the bright autumn forest on the steep slope of the nearest ridge.

This is the Hillbilly Highway — and it's one that is immensely fun to drive.

Good Times, Hard Times

If you start out in Lenoir, you can drop in on Roger Hicks, who has been blind since he was about 40 years old. But he's been "color-blind" all his life. That's obvious to anyone who listens to his music or who just sits down and converses with him for a spell.

The true Hillbilly Highway is a collection of meandering mountain roads, joined by a lifestyle that cannot be separated by changes in route numbers.

A soft-spoken man who is an extraordinary potter, Hicks makes music that is an ongoing tribute to the historic working

Greg Floyd

Woody Goforth and his son Jimmy.

class of the region — both black and white — with its curious amalgam of good times and sweat-of-the-brow hardship.

In 1995, Hicks, 58, released a CD entitled *All I Have Is Memories.* The cover shows him standing in front of a furniture factory clad in his characteristic flannel shirt and blue jeans. "I chose that title," he says, "because of the type of music I grew up with." What he grew up with includes an eclectic mix of "old-timey" bluegrass and what Hicks calls the "Piedmont blues": a deliberate blend of folk and blues that reflects the culture of the Appalachians. The variety of his music comes naturally, asserts Hicks. "I was exposed to quite a variety of different kinds of music because factory workers came from all over. My dad was a furniture worker. I was raised in the old mill houses around Lenoir."

Back then, during the 1950s and even earlier, "you could go up and down the streets, and people would be playing instruments on their porches," he remembers. "That was a big form of entertainment."

Greg Floyd

Carl and Ethel Crump.

At the Pickin' Parlor

As is eating — if you'll ride a few minutes up to the north side of town, you'll meet 80-something Woody Goforth who, when referring to his cooking, says, "I think I make some good gravy. Ain't had no complaints. I've had some try to copy it, but it hadn't come up to my standards."

A soft-spoken man who is an extraordinary potter, Hicks makes music that is an ongoing tribute to the historic working class of the region.

The same can be said about his banjo and guitar pickin' — though you'll not get him to admit it. But that's OK because there's plenty of others who would say it, based on the turnout at the Woodlands every Sunday night, a barbecue restaurant in the naturally air-conditioned mountain town of Blowing Rock, N.C. Goforth and his 49-year-old partner, Terry McDonald, have been regulars at the "pickin' parlor" for several years, where bluegrass music is as much a part of the menu as smoked pork, baked beans, and cornbread.

But Goforth doesn't call his renderings bluegrass. "It was old hillbilly music when I started playing it. I never even heard it called bluegrass music then. I just call it 'old-timey' music." He's been playing since about 1921 when he first picked up a guitar. He now leaves a legacy of music: his two sons pick, one daughter plays the organ, and another sings. In fact, a visit to his home in Lenoir is likely to turn into an impromptu pickin' session with his son Jimmy. With just a little prodding, Goforth ambles over to a bookshelf and grabs a box full of picks, while Jimmy gathers up the guitar and banjo, both worn by time.

Goforth will warn the listener, "Now, I ain't much count, but I'll do my best. I hope you enjoy it." Forty-five minutes later, they will have worked their way through a gospel tune or two, a few bluegrass favorites, and even a couple of songs they've each written. The elder Goforth reports, "Daddy taught me everything I know about music" and points to a picture of a small frame house covered with snow, sitting quietly in the mountains. It's the old homestead, and he's written a song about it. Says Jimmy Goforth about his own father, "Daddy's got so many old songs, some of them will jerk your heart out 'cause they're true."

Telling Tales

From here, it's on up Staircase Mountain — riding back roads, curvy and dusty, toward the Blue Ridge Parkway — to pop in on a couple of folks who hold true to another fine hillbilly form of entertainment: storytelling.

"Sure, come on up. We'll be here," offers 79-year-old Carl Crump when asked if he and his wife, Ethel, could spare a bit of time. "But I'm not sure what we'll talk about."

You can be sure they will think of something because "it was entertainment to hear people talk," says the missus as she reflects upon an uncle who used to come around when she was growing up, back in the 1930s. "They were older than us and had better tales to tell than we did."

Not any more. Now they — by benefit of a long life — have the "better" tales. Apparently other folks think so, too. "We have a lot of company," reveals Ethel. "A lot of people come in."

Says Jimmy Goforth about his own father, "Daddy's got so many old songs, some of them will jerk your heart out 'cause they're true."

It's not surprising.

Even a ride up the seldom-used dirt roads of the homestead offers opportuni-

Michael Barrick

H. Mast with his wife, Mary, and their granddaughter, Mary Katherine.

ties for telling stories. With every twist of the dirt road, Carl would holler back through the sliding window of the truck, sharing the legend of a woman washed away in a flood whose body was found in the deep valley below or of a neighbor who shot a bear high on the ridge above or of the deer with the 14-point rack that was drug up between the trees on the ridge over there.

With every twist of the dirt road, Carl Crump would holler back through the sliding window of the truck, sharing the legend of a woman washed away in a flood whose body was found in the deep valley below.

The stories mostly come from lives full of hard work. Every Good Friday, weather permitting, they and about a dozen of their neighbors and relatives can be found hunched over freshly plowed dirt rows, planting potatoes. The labor, while inherently rewarding, is also a lesson for the younger planters among the group in neighborliness, mutual dependency, and a deeper appreciation for God's bounty.

While Ethel keeps the coffee going on what is customarily a windy and chilly day, three or four generations will be on their knees or sitting cutting seed potatoes with pocket knives. Others will be raking the dirt back over the tubers.

Six or seven months later, usually around early October, the stained knees and sore lower backs of the spring are rewarded as giant spuds miraculously appear behind the tractor run by Carl, who's smiling the whole time. He does that a lot. As he ambles through the yard, talking to the chickens or pointing to the small brook nearby and recalling the trout it left behind following a flood or pointing to a deer stand in the tall pines he and a neighbor planted, he smiles. The sparkle in the eye blends with the wrinkles that reach to his temples. As he slowly makes his way back up to the house, Ethel — who is good at many things often forgotten today — offers one of her famous hot cups of coffee.

Party Lines and Pencils

Of all the things to be good at, sharpening a pencil wouldn't seem to be the most important. It was, though, for H. Mast of Valle Crucis, N.C., an original owner of The Mast General Store, a well-known general merchandise store still going strong some 25 years after he sold it.

The story goes like this: Mary Hazel Farthing knew in the second grade — that was about 1932 — that she would marry H. Howard Mast Jr. It was love at first … carving.

Mary Mast explains, "The pencil trimmer tore up. So the teacher told the kids that we had to use pocket knives to sharpen our pencils." Pipes in Howard, who prefers to be called "H.," "You never saw a pencil so mutilated in your life."

Mary admits she wasn't particularly skilled at the finer points of wood carving and was having a tough go of it. All of her classmates made fun of her — all of them except for H., that is. "He came up so nice — not teasing me like the other kids — and said, 'I'll do that for you.' I knew right then we'd be married." They were, in 1946, just a stone's throw away from where they now live.

Recalling those days in the late 1930s and early 1940s when their love was untried, Mary says, "Everybody along the line could hear when H. would ring me. We had party lines: two longs, two shorts — that sort of thing. Folks would listen in. You could hear the clicking of the receivers going up. Of course, I did that too."

Seemingly lost in time, H. gazes toward Mary and offers, "We still court. Thank goodness for that pocket knife."

Visiting

A full day of visiting, and you've only made it into two counties in North Carolina's high country. So if you're going to travel the Hillbilly Highway, you'd better not be in a hurry.

Seemingly lost in time, H. Mast gazes toward Mary and offers, "We still court."

There are more direct, quicker routes, but none offer the views — or the outlooks — that you'll find along the Hillbilly Highway. But don't look for it on a road map. Simply follow your heart. N&T

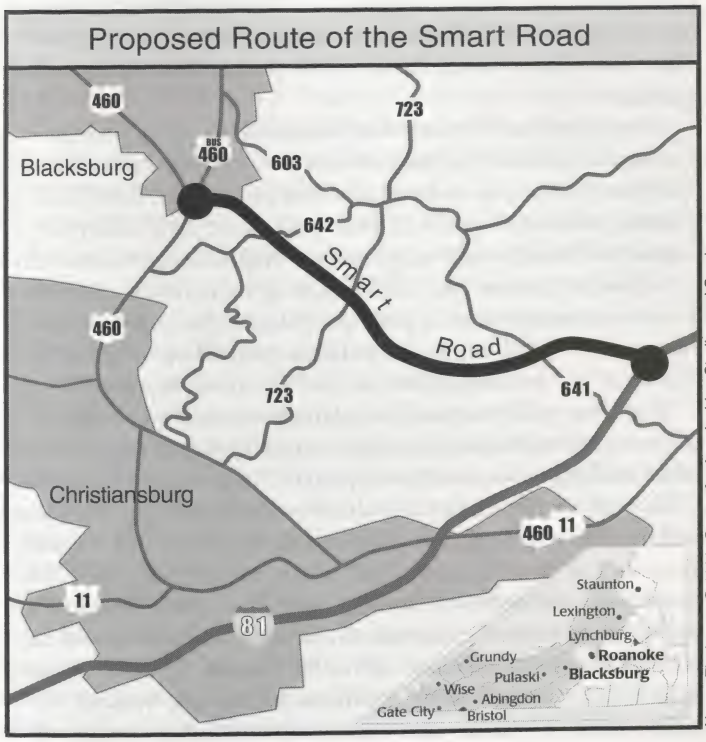
This essay is adapted from Michael Barrick's recent book, The Hillbilly Highway *(brief review on p. 39). Barrick is a free-lance writer living in Granite Falls, N.C.*

SMART ROAD

by Chris Pugh

A sleek cross between a Ray Bradbury metroplex and a computer-generated automobile commercial — that's the kind of road system for the new millennium that Southwest Virginia researchers have in mind.

It's more than some far-fetched science fiction fantasy. Staff members at Virginia Tech's Center for Transportation Research (CTR) in Blacksburg, Va., and elsewhere anticipate the existence of what they call Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)



Nancy Fischman, © 1998, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services

Transportation researchers look to a short stretch of high-tech road to take us closer to an automotive utopia.

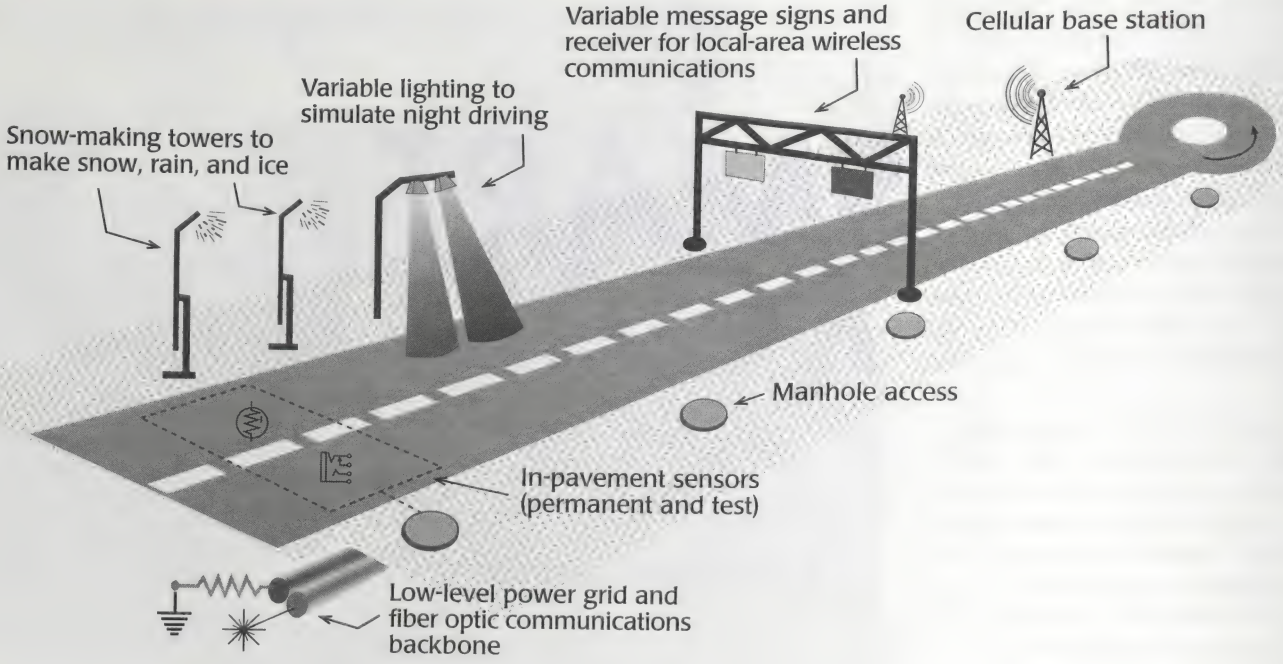
at some point in the not-too-distant future. Such systems would apply modern computer and communications technologies to transportation.

When that day comes, travel will look quite different: Commuters in futuristic, nonpolluting electric vehicles cruise along automated highway systems safely, conveniently, and at high speeds. Pavement sensors embedded in the road control traffic, with advanced warning systems preventing many accidents. Ultraviolet markings provide improved night vision, while

> *Commuters in futuristic, nonpolluting electric vehicles cruise along automated highway systems safely, conveniently, and at high speeds.*

weather-sensitive pavement reduces the risks of driving in snow and rain. Using an in-dash screen to plot routes, cars communicate with roadside sensors and with other vehicles to help maintain safe driving distances. Ultimately, we will all be able to drive "hands-off/feet-off."

ITS proponents see the Smart Road — a 5.8-mile limited access highway linking Blacksburg, Va., and I-81 — as an important first step toward making this vision of an automotive utopia a reality. It is a dream that will be realized, CTR re-


Variable message signs and receiver for local-area wireless communications
Cellular base station
Variable lighting to simulate night driving
Snow-making towers to make snow, rain, and ice
Manhole access
In-pavement sensors (permanent and test)
Low-level power grid and fiber optic communications backbone

Courtesy of Center for Transportation Research. Redrawn by Nancy Fischman.

The Smart Road test bed will contain a variety of technological innovations which will allow for testing both the roadway and vehicles to help develop an intelligent transportation system.

searchers say, through the development of a series of "stepping stone" technologies. Although other institutions are working on ITS projects, the Smart Road aspires to be the nation's first full-scale ITS research facility.

A High-tech Short Cut

Backers see the road as potentially benefiting the entire New River Valley, from Pulaski County to Christiansburg, Va. To be built in four phases, this high-tech short cut has a price tag of

The Smart Road aspires to be the nation's first full-scale Intelligent Transportation System research facility.

roughly $108 million. Officials, including former Virginia Gov. George Allen, participated in groundbreaking ceremonies on July 8, 1997.

It all started in 1989 when the idea for the Smart Road came from Roanoke, Va., area business leaders who wanted a better connection between Virginia Tech, the state's largest university, and the Star City, with its population of just under 100,000. Why not, the planners asked, dedicate the initial portion of the connector road to CTR and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) transportation research while construction was proceeding on the rest of the project? And so the idea of the "test bed" was born. Since the plan calls for two lanes to be open to traffic by roughly 2010, with two additional lanes possibly constructed by 2020, this test bed is expected to have a life span on the order of 10 to 15 years.

At this point, then, what began originally as something of an afterthought now stands squarely at the heart of the project—and often at the center of the controversy that surrounds it. The test bed is essentially a stretch of the highway that incorporates special features and equipment that will allow researchers to try out their ideas on the open road, often under artificially created conditions. Not only will scientists experiment with ITS technologies, but they will also do more mundane work: trying out different types of pavements, bridges, and overpasses; running experiments on vehicle dynamics and the performance of various kinds of tires; and testing methods of snow and ice control. They even plan to work on the development of better roadside grasses.

Some sections of the test bed, then, will be paved with experimental concrete and asphalt surfaces. In cooperation with Virginia Tech's crop and soil sciences department, the CTR is planting alternative roadside grasses to gauge their ability to control soil erosion and help limit mowing and maintenance. At either end of the test bed will be high-speed turnarounds to allow for continuous driving. In addition, planners have made sure to incorporate varied terrain, including a range of elevations, from 3 percent to 6 percent grades, as well as several bridges.

But what really excites transportation researchers—and dismays some community members and environmentalists—are 73 snow-making towers, each 40 feet tall. These towers will enable CTR staff to produce not only snow but also rain, fog, and ice at will. Various lighting technologies will be installed so that scientists can test those technologies' effects on visibility. And CTR researchers are currently working on plans to put advanced wireless systems along the test bed so that a Smart Road control center will be able to broadcast up-to-date weather reports, tourism information, or news about accidents directly into vehicles. Finally, a state-of-the-art fiber optic communications system will

Gene Dalton, The Roanoke Times

As construction began on the first phase of the Smart Road, it was discovered that foundation rock was interrupted by muddy patches that could cause rock slides. The original vertical rock walls have been redesigned to become sloping terraces, delaying completion for a year.

run on the outside of the test bed in a loop configuration. This system will allow the command center to receive information from the roadway itself and send signals to equipment such as snow-making machines and variable message signs.

Building the Road

The design work for the Smart Road has been a cooperative effort of the CTR, the Richmond, Va.-based VDOT, VDOT's Virginia Transportation Research Center, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The entire two-mile test bed will be built during phase one and phase two. With an estimated cost of $17.3 million, phase one of the Smart Road project will consist of building the initial 1.7 miles of the experimental stretch.

Originally, this first phase was scheduled for completion by late 1998. Preliminary construction plans called for 150-foot vertical rock walls to support the mountains on each side of the Smart Road. However, further study this fall showed that foundation rock was interrupted by muddy patches that could cause rock slides. VDOT revised its original plan, turning the walls into more sloping terraces to keep rocks from rolling onto the roadbed. This modification, announced in mid-October, has delayed completion of this phase for another year.

The second phase—consisting of the construction of the remainder of the test bed, including a bridge over Montgomery County's Wilson Creek—is expected to cost $12.5 million and be completed by approximately March 2000. With an average height of 152 feet, the bridge will peak at 168 feet, making it one of Virginia's highest.

The $50-million phase three will see the construction of two lanes connecting to I-81 and the building of interchanges linking the road with U.S. 460 and I-81. This two-lane road is expected to be open to normal traffic sometime between 2002 and 2010. At this point, only a short stretch of the test bed will still be a controlled research area; on other portions, researchers will essentially do traffic fieldwork, conducting tests that won't impede actual traffic.

Finally, a phase four is tentatively penciled in: the construction, if demand warrants, of two additional lanes by 2020. What that road will look like will depend in part on what investigators learn from their research efforts on the Smart Road's test bed. Some CTR staff members, for example, would like to see the fiber optic system extended to I-81. It's unlikely, however, that the snow-making towers or the variable lighting systems will be found beyond the original test bed. Still, once the road is completed, researchers hope to have limited, off-peak access to their old test facility.

Opposition

The New Century Council, a forward-looking economic group in Southwest Virginia, has called the Smart Road "the single most important capital project in the region" and transportation technology as the "keystone for economic development efforts in the next century." According to VDOT, Council executive director Bev Fitzpatrick, a certified economic developer, says that transportation-related industries, such as wireless communications, fiber optics, electronics, robotics, software development, and defense, are all likely to be attracted to Montgomery County because of the Smart Road. By the CTR's estimate, transportation research alone will generate from 50 to 100 jobs. Added to that are an estimated 1,500 jobs associated with transportation-related manufacturing that could turn out $250 billion in products from the New River Valley over the next 20 years.

The New Century Council, a forward-looking economic group in Southwest Virginia, has called the Smart Road "the single most important capital project in the region."

Not everyone considers the planned road "smart," however. Many criticize the road as fiscally irresponsible at best—and at worst, an environmental disaster. State highway officials believe the new road is necessary to relieve traffic congestion predicted for the area as it continues to grow. By all reports, the new road is expected to shave about six minutes off the Blacksburg-to-Roanoke trip—not enough of a time savings to justify a $108-million expenditure, say opponents. They think a better solution would be to widen existing roads.

People who live in Montgomery County's Ellett Valley have watched the road construction cut a gash in their treasured rural

environment. Adversaries say the predicted economic benefit of the road is a pipe dream. And even if economic growth does follow the highway's construction, not everyone calls that growth "progress."

In a 1997 letter to *The Roanoke Times,* Montgomery County resident Richard D. Shepherd criticized the road. "I ask citizens of the county to drive down Virginia 642 where the Smart Road is under construction. The demolition of the land will make you heartsick. It is totally out of character for that beautiful valley,

Not everyone considers the planned road "smart," however. Many criticize the road as fiscally irresponsible at best—and at worst, an environmental disaster.

and it is even more nauseating because it is of no real value to the prosperity of our county or the future of transportation for the average citizen."

Lawsuits

Still other foes claim that during the road's planning, VDOT and Tech did not sufficiently factor public opinion into the equation. Too many decisions were made behind closed doors, they say.

According to the Smart Road's adversaries, environmental impact studies were incomplete or inaccurate. In particular, early VDOT documents were misleading, opponents insist, since they never mentioned the snow-making towers and noted instead that Blacksburg's climate would allow testing in all kinds of weather. In June 1996, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, whose support was crucial, voted to approve the project. It wasn't until the following fall that a memo leaked to the opposition revealed plans for the water-guzzling snow-making towers, potentially using up to 175,000 gallons of water an hour. Later, documents surfaced that showed that VDOT and Tech transportation officials had met at least two months prior to the crucial Board of Supervisors vote to discuss the snow-making equipment.

In a *Roanoke Times* guest editorial in 1997, Michael Abraham complained, "The ifs and whens and 'to what extent' details of all aspects of the road have been tailored to discount viable alternatives, downplay widespread public opposition, hype speculative benefits and generally keep the public at bay."

The right-of-way for the road calls for 403 acres, which is 150 more than the state originally planned. Before construction could begin, Montgomery County officials had to remove 140 acres from an agricultural and forest district designed to conserve land, drawing still more criticism from local citizens and groups.

Multiple lawsuits have been filed to try and stop the road construction. One, brought in May 1996 by Sierra Club spokeswoman Shireen I. Parsons, was dismissed the following September because Parsons failed to show how she would be personally harmed by the road construction. Environmental groups filed a lawsuit in U. S. District Court in November 1995 to slow the road construction. The suit asked the court to order a more thorough environmental review. That request was turned down in October 1996. Appeals on behalf of the Sierra Club, the New River Valley Greens, and the New River Valley Environmental Coalition were filed in December 1996.

In September 1998, the U.S. Court of Appeals in Richmond sided with VDOT, noting that the environmental groups had failed to prove that the road planners had acted "arbitrarily and capriciously" when they failed to include snow-making towers and other features in an environmental impact statement. As of mid-November, the coalition had not announced whether or not they had decided to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Saving Lives, Saving Dollars

Officials at Tech's CTR staunchly defend the importance of transportation research and projects such as the Smart Road, calling it a critical foundation of modern society. According to the CTR, transportation is the second largest expenditure in the average American household's budget. Approximately $800 billion is spent annually in the United States on transportation services, representing a quarter of the gross national product.

New technologies stemming from the construction of the Smart Road and its subsequent use as a transportation research facility could result in numerous benefits, CTR researchers argue. Finding ways to improve safety could help reduce the human and economic cost—roughly 40,000 deaths and $25 billion—associated with the 3.6 million accidents that take place annually on the nation's highways. That $25 billion, they point out, is more than the combined amount spent cleaning up damages in the wake of the Gulf War, Hurricane Andrew, and the 1993 flooding in the Midwest. Increased highway efficiency could potentially reduce the approximately $100 billion in lost productivity due to traffic congestion, while the development of better construction materials could save on highway maintenance and vehicle up-

People who live in Montgomery County's Ellett Valley have watched the road construction cut a gash in their treasured rural environment.

keep. Finally, improved vehicle design can make the movement of goods throughout the country more efficient.

Partners & Projects

The CTR has already attracted an impressive list of potential partners to assist in its research. For example, in March of 1998, the FHWA awarded a "Enhanced Night Visibility on Highways" grant totaling $2.6 million to the CTR and VDOT's Research Council to conduct a three-and-a-half year research project aimed at improving visibility at night and during bad weather.

Preliminary tests have shown that ultraviolet lights, similar to the "black lights" popular in the 1960s and 1970s, allow drivers to see up to 30 percent farther as well as make pedestrians much easier to see. The phosphate residues on pedestrians' clothes, deposited by laundry detergents, glow under such ultraviolet illumination. CTR researchers will test prototype ultra-

violet headlights on cars and paint road signs and highway markers with special fluorescent-reactive particles. Private corporate partners in the research will be Ford Motor Company—which will supply the prototype headlights—and 3M Company, Day-Glo Color Corporation, and Carsonite International, which will provide the pavement markings, signs, and lane delineators. Depending on how closely construction manages to stick to the project's timetable, testing of such devices might begin on the Smart Road as early as the winter of 1999.

This past fall, the FHWA also awarded the CTR a $400,000 "Operational Review of Specialty Vehicles" grant. The FHWA is asking the CTR to evaluate specialty vehicles such as snow plows. In what could prove to be one of those stepping stone technologies that eventually leads to a full-scale ITS, these snow plows will be outfitted with equipment such as global positioning systems, which are systems that use information beamed down from satellites to help individuals pinpoint their location, and lane guidance devices that will read magnetic nails and tapes laid down both in the shoulders and in the middle of the Smart Road's traffic lane. All of which is designed, of course, to help plows maintain lane position on snow-covered roadways.

Snow plows will be equipped with global positioning systems and lane guidance devices that will read magnetic nails and tapes laid down both in the shoulders and in the middle of the Smart Road's traffic lane.

Smart vehicles are also a focus of CTR research. Cars with radar obstacle detection and avoidance systems are already being designed to detect a large object, such as a grocery cart, positioned behind a car. Computerized "eyes" on the cars would even "see" signs and traffic signals when the driver's vision is impaired by fog or an obstruction. With funding from Delco, the CTR is installing instrumentation in an automobile for automated speech recognition, a programmable dash, and a collision warning system, as well as instrumentation that measures driver performance.

The Smart Road will supply a site for testing and evaluating these types of products and how they affect driver performance, tackling such questions as: Do they make driving easier? Do they take more of the driver's attention away from the road than they should? How do they work in snow and rain?

Since the days of the horse and buggy, the search for new and better modes of transportation has drawn society to bigger, faster, safer, and more efficient methods of travel. In Southwest Virginia, the picture of transportation's future seems to be coming into focus on a controversial piece of highway less than six miles long. N&T

Chris Pugh is the former publisher of The Recorder, *located in Highland and Bath Counties of Virginia. She is currently the publications manager for Ruritan National, headquartered in Dublin, Va.*

Train Ride

I thought the day would never come
when I'd be sitting here with you.
My only defense for your pain,
a story of woe unspoken and an irksome passage.

In midnight shadows, sister's husband
came upon me, left me bloody, bruised,
forever changed, while he, knight
of the black mask, his armor invincible,
rode forth to conquer other priceless realms.
The nightmares come true,
Papa put me on the train.
"Going away for more schooling," he said.
Just fifteen, I'd never ridden a train,
though I'd heard it yodel through the hollow,
echo off the mountains,
heard boys boast about riding the rails.
I've taken many train trips since,
wheels clacking down the tracks,
smoke chuffing behind me,
but no journey's been as long as the first—
a haze of grief and nausea,
face black with soot.
Alone on Christmas day, I dreamed
of stockings by the fire, scents
of cedar and candlewax, Mama's
turkey and dressing, Papa's blessing—
would his grace cover me?

After my tedious tribulation, I cuddled you—
face screwed up against the light,
hands clutching onto life.
Questions rose, but no answers—
how could I feed you? where would I go?
Papa's stonebound face, like the face
of an angel with a fiery sword,
thrust me from you.
The couple—beautiful and rich—
came to get you,
and the train ride went on,
me riding the rails, looking for home.

How could I, a pilgrim, blind and deaf,
wandering in a barren desert,
know that you, also seeking a homebound
track, would solve the maze
of routes and timetables?
But seeing you here,
the tiresome trek's over;
the train's come to harbor
where the journey began fifty years ago.

—Elizabeth Howard

Elizabeth Howard's poems have appeared in Half Tones to Jubilee, Slant, Poem, Wind, *and other journals. She has a new chapbook,* Anemones. *Howard lives and writes in Crossville, Tenn.*

Ithaca

Fred Waage

The idea that Ithaca, N.Y., is part of Appalachia is laughable. People in that area (I lived there 30 years) do not relate to the mountains, do not consider themselves Appalachians, and are culturally part of New York City. The only supporters of this pernicious fiction would be local congressmen, eager for "Appalachian" money, which they neither need nor deserve.

—David Wallace
Christiansburg, Va.
Letter to the editor, *Now & Then,* Vol. 15, No. 1,
Spring 1998, p. 2.

If you find her poor, Ithaca has not defrauded you.
—Greek Poet C. P. Cavafy
(1863 -1933)

Somewhere, there's a picture of me standing on the rubber-lined running board of the 1939 Packard touring car my grandfather gave to my parents at their marriage. I can almost see my father pushing it out of the driveway — so he could save war-rationed gas — and letting it coast the two-and-one-half miles down the precipitous hillsides to Ithaca, N.Y., to use his coupons at the farmers' co-op down by the railroad. He grew some good hill corn in those years.

Our favorite country road outside Ithaca was the Mecklenburg Road. We called it the roller coaster: Gun up one hill and coast down the next, over and over. We went on it out to White's Nursery located in a converted farmhouse. Once as a five- or six-year-old, I explored the old house, opened a door, and fell a story onto a cement basement floor. When I came to, my mother gave me a four-leaf clover. It's one short trip I don't remember.

When we were Ithaca High School students, we hiked and camped the steep hills and trouty streams with two adventurous German ringleaders, Norwig and Nordulf. Second-growth forest and vacant fields abounded. We were free to traipse anywhere. On one occasion, my friend Bob Blean made me take a survival hike. His father let us off out in the woods with no equipment and a bar of chocolate each. Forty-eight hours later, we wandered into a hospitable farm. They called home for us. I hugged the walls, trying to conceal from the farm girls the stem-to-stern rip in my pants.

Courtesy of Fred Waage

A young Fred Waage stands beside the family car, buried by the big snow of 1955.

Wandering was a way of life for kids growing up in Ithaca. At four, I got thrashed for hopping a truck headed down to the World War II Victory gardens at the foot of Cayuga Lake. Even my dog rode all day long in the cabs of the milk delivery trucks.

On another occasion, we parked south on the Elmira Road by the abandoned Lehigh Valley Railroad right-of-way (many a night trip I remember in those clicking sleeping cars), crossed fields watching for bulls, crawled under barbed wire, reached sycamores — a steep uphill that went for two miles with no trail except for the mossy stream-bed. Then we suddenly emerged in an encompassing, breathtaking bowl of rock walls almost 360 degrees around, broken only by the unnamed stream's thin plummet and outflow. This spectacular bowl had no name and no protection. My parents first climbed to it in the 1930s. My mother reached it for the last time in her 60s. I took several adventurous girls there in my teens, but the mood was too spooky, and nothing came of it.

My first awareness that Cornell University did not constitute the world came in Boynton Junior High, when our local history teacher gave us credit for finding and transcribing state historical markers, blue with gold washed-out lettering. The state had put these markers on even the most obscure unlined blacktop. My father, who as a boy bicycled the Pennsylvania Appalachians all day with a waterproofed map between his handlebars, had topographic maps of the entire Southern Tier, the counties in New York state which lie south of the Finger Lakes. So, seeking markers, my mother and I drove past various poor, rich, and abandoned farms, over convoluted terrain identical to East Tennessee foothills, through deserted hamlets, and by grass-choked family graveyards. I remember my mother backing the puffy Buick for half-an-hour after we almost crashed into a bridge washout in the Arnot Forest, near Elmira, N.Y.

Wandering was a way of life for kids growing up in Ithaca in the 1940s and 1950s. At four, I got thrashed for hopping a truck headed down to the World War II Victory gardens at the foot of Cayuga Lake. Even my dog rode all day long in the cabs of the milk delivery trucks. Hugging the university, our suburb did not yet invade the uplake hardscrabble farmland of Lansing Township. Footed and pawed hordes explored abandoned fields, unpolluted salamander streams, and pine copses every day. The only store nearby, at the Corners, was a general store and gas station. There were big tubs of candy so we hit the Corners with sticky coins at least once a day. Or the tribe would rush the abandoned orchards, catapulting steely apples from the tips of supple branches at imaginary enemies.

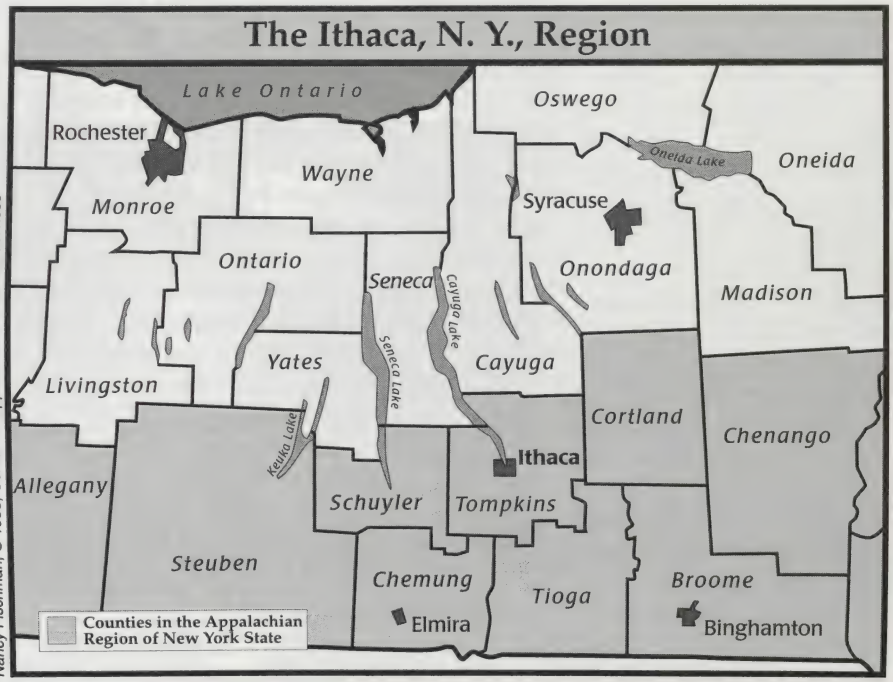
Older, I tried to set records walking vertically home from school every day. I got so I could walk straight uphill to my house from the downtown in 20 minutes. In cross country, Robin Williams (no, not *the* Robin Williams) and I would attack gut-busting Gun Hill, where the street curved from Ithaca Falls up around the Ithaca Gun Company, past company houses, where snotty-nosed kids yelled epithets at us.

How do you define Appalachia? How high the mountains? How rural the land? How self-referential the inhabitants? I was ignorant for a long time that my hometown was in Appalachia.

Like my current East Tennessee home, Johnson City, Ithaca started out as a farming and transportation center. Its first names were The Flats, Sodom, and Sin City. Its surroundings were surveyed and gridded rectangularly, with many of the parcels given by the fledgling federal government to Revolutionary War veterans for their service. These veterans, in turn, gave localities classicized names in the neoclassicizing mode of the new nation.

As with many university towns alien to the surrounding geocultural terrain, Ithaca exerts a centripetal pull on its upscale inhabitants' hearts and minds.

During the Civil War, Ithaca was a hotbed of Copperheads,



Northern Democrats who opposed the Civil War and advocated a negotiated settlement with the South. And so, again like Johnson City, it was a town deeply divided. The opening of Cornell University in 1868 and Ithaca College in 1890 initiated

How do you define Appalachia?
How high the mountains?
How rural the land?
How self-referential the inhabitants?

the creation of a progressive cultural enclave consisting mainly of the members of the higher education community.

So then, as with many university towns alien to the surrounding geocultural terrain, Ithaca exerts a centripetal pull on its *upscale* inhabitants' hearts and minds. But it didn't exert that pull on my classmates Big Daddy Antrum, still a scoop tram operator at Cargill Salt on Cayuga Lake, or Pat McDougall, a rural letter carrier. But like Chapel Hill, N.C., Blacksburg, Va., and Athens, both Ohio and Ga., this atypical college town did take possession of me until I traveled outside its gravitational pull and eventually came to live in the Southern Appalachians. I discovered there the similarities between my new home and those rolling hills and streams and rock walls and lakes where I had come of age.

I think we all should travel back sometimes—not to our own State Streets and College Avenues but to the countryside of memory which impinges on our community's fabric, here and everywhere. N&T

Fred Waage runs the hills of East Tennessee when he is not teaching English at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tenn. He was the founding editor of Now & Then.

They Ride by Night

Racing home from Dick Lamvermeyer's after dark,
more energy than sense being pumped into bicycle
pedals too soon claiming the road as their own, any
braking wind quiet hours after sundown, my wheels
must take me halfway around a rough mile before
I give up to being a day older but still adolescent.
Just ahead of me after I make the first turn to the
right lies John Baumann's sugar bush where I slow
down to better see the path the road makes through
the trees that's more visible in the heavens than
on earth, so I lift my vision temporarily, trusting
also in the sound of my bike tires moving safely in
gravel travel tracks, more likely saved from disaster
by that cloud of worries hung over the moon by Mother
and a coven of lovers living in my future, the com-
pletion of my course proceeding as planned as I take
the second right turn and head down a grade bordered
by Osage orange hedges keeping sound in and lumens out
till a flashlight ignites air above the clatter con-
fronting me and a bodiless horseman begins cursing
the kid that turned an ordinary night into a story.

—Glenn McKee

A native of Appalachian Ohio, Glenn McKee has lived in Waterville, Maine, for the past 25 years. He happens to believe poetry—not government or technology—holds the key to humanity's future. McKee won second prize in this year's Now & Then *Appalachian Poetry Competition.*

"In Your Blood"

Wagon Training Through Southern Appalachia

by Theresa Lloyd

Weekend pioneers take an ever-so-slow journey into America's past.

Almost any summer weekend somewhere in the Upper South, you can see a wagon train winding slowly along a remote back road. Unlike their 19th century predecessors, today's wagon trains are purely recreational, with late 20th century technology providing modern teamsters with comforts that pioneers couldn't have imagined. Still, the pace of the journey and the joys and difficulties of managing teams and wagons are vivid reminders of a bygone era.

The South isn't the only place wagon trains take place today. Would-be teamsters can find big for-profit Midwestern and Western wagon trains advertised in *Trail Rider* magazine. Reenactment wagon trains, such as the 1997 Mormon trek, also occur periodically. But Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Georgia do seem to have more than their share of small local rides that occur almost every weekend, from early spring to late fall. These events attract from four to 40 wagons and 10 to 200 riders; participants range from not-yet-walking babies to octogenarian grandparents.

Theresa Lloyd

Joleen Ernst follows right behind a wagon as the rest of the train winds slowly along a back road. This Carroll County, Va., Wagon Train took to the trail over the Fourth of July, 1997.

On the Trail

To get the feel of a modern wagon train, you'll want to arrive at the campsite the night before the first ride. You'll be driving a pickup truck that's towing a gooseneck horse trailer — preferably a big one that has a front compartment for sleeping and cooking — and behind the trailer you'll piggyback your wagon. That first night — and all subsequent nights — there'll be a band, which will play bluegrass, country, and rock. You'll dance, or you'll sit around the campfire and swap stories of past wagon train adventures; maybe you'll drink some beer or bourbon or, if you've got the right connections, moonshine.

No matter how late you go to bed — and it will probably have been just a mite too late, since, as Maggie Reed of Carter County, Tenn., puts it, "you don't go to a wagon train to sleep" — the next morning you'll hitch your team or saddle your horse or mule if you're a rider. Then you'll head out of camp by 9:00 or 9:30 a.m. At a slower pace than you can possibly imagine if your journeying has been limited to automobiles, a pace so slow that you can see and identify and savor each wildflower you pass, you'll roll along a one-lane road or an even narrower gravel lane. The wagon will creak, the gravel will pop beneath your wheels, horses' and mules' hooves will ring in concert up and down the line. But it will also seem very silent because you won't hear any car engines. The sun

will drift higher and higher, and if you're on horseback, you'll be roasting. But in the shade of the wagon's cover, you'll be cool.

Late in the afternoon, you'll return to camp, and you'll be more tired than you thought you'd be since you've only been sitting all day. If you've had the foresight to rig up a shower in your horse trailer or camper, you'll wash off the trail dust raised by as many as 30 wagons and 200 saddle horses. And again there'll be a band, dancing, and campfire stories.

Theresa Lloyd

A vintage wagon shows the name of its manufacturer, Lamons Wagon Co. of Greeneville, Tenn. This wagon has iron-rimmed, spoked wooden wheels.

The next day, you'll do it all over again. That afternoon, if you're on a weekend wagon train, you'll pack up when you return to camp and head home. If you're out for an entire week — say, the Fourth of July — you'll still have five more days of riding. Either way, when you pull out into the traffic, you'll wonder if you could ever have the energy to do this again. But, of course, you will do it again, if you're one of those people whom wagon trainers describe as "having it in your blood."

At a slower pace than you can possibly imagine, a pace so slow that you can see and identify and savor each wildflower you pass, you'll roll along a one-lane road or an even narrower gravel lane.

Reconnecting with the Past

If you ask modern teamsters why they wagon-train, and you don't get the in-your-blood response, likely they will tell you that it's a way to reconnect with the past. For some, that past is the 19th century westward migration. Although Appalachian teamsters, unlike Westerners, rarely have family stories connected with that westward trek, the Old West is such an important part of our national mythology that, in a sense, it's a part of all Americans' past.

According to North Carolina newspaper reporter Jim Thompson's *Wagon Train: 30 Years Across the Far Blue Ridge,* Sam Williams, a founder of the annual Western North Carolina wagon train, declared that 1950s television Westerns such as *Gunsmoke* and *Wagon Train* helped give Southerners the idea of holding wagon trains. Myra Leonard, a veteran wagon trainer from Carroll County, Va., says that riding in a wagon all day long helps her understand "what the pioneers went through."

Other teamsters, however, will mention a more immediate past that wagon training evokes: the history of their own Appalachian communities in the days before cars, trucks, and tractors became common. Levi Smith, a retired Dugspur, Va., farmer who has been wagon training for over 30 years, is typical of older teamsters who, while rolling along on a wagon train, like to recount stories of teams and wagons they remember from their youth. Levi's neighbor and fellow teamster Jesse Newman remembers that during his boyhood in the 1930s, his father, a storekeeper, used a team to haul railroad ties into town, then returned to their remote mountain community with a wagonload of supplies for the store.

These two pasts, Western and Appalachian, converged in the 1950s and 1960s as wagon training emerged in the South as a recreational activity. According to Odell Hussey, a teamster from the North Carolina Piedmont who has wagon-trained in the foothills of the Blue Ridge, two factors account for the rise of wagon training during the decades following World War II. First, throughout the South, farmers were completing the switch from teams to tractors. Second, as a result of post-war prosperity, people began to have the time and means for leisure activities. It was only natural, then, that farmers who enjoyed working with teams would engage in recreations that enabled them to get those now-idle helpmates out of the pasture. The new activity took on romantic overtones of the Old West, whose image could now be seen in most Southern homes, thanks to the ubiquity of television; that Western veneer softened memories of the drudgery involved in farming with teams.

Theresa Lloyd

Wagon styles vary. More recent teamsters have added pneumatic tires (as on the wagon in front), hydraulic brakes for safety, iron frames for sturdiness, and — sometimes for additional comfort — padded or bucket seats.

19th Century Mack Trucks

In the early days of wagon training — a favorite topic of

older participants whenever they gather — teamsters drove whatever wagons they had around the farm. This meant, typically, a vehicle with wooden spokes and axles; mechanical, hand-operated brakes; and iron-rimmed wheels. As wagon training progressed, most teamsters switched to iron frames for sturdiness, hydraulic brakes for safety, and pneumatic tires for a more comfortable ride. In a further effort to augment comfort, they replaced wooden seats with bucket car seats or padded school bus seats.

Theresa Lloyd

A pair of Belgian draft horses pulls a wagon in the Butler, Tenn., 1998 Wagon Train.

Right from the start, most modern teamsters drove covered wagons. Although the covered wagon may seem to hail directly from the Old West, in actuality it is as traditional as the buckboard in Southern Appalachia. Historically, Appalachian farmers and merchants used covered wagons for hauling freight that needed to stay dry, such as a market crop of tobacco. Modern teamsters who find themselves with a coverless wagon will make bows or have them made by a local wagonwright, a few of whom still exist, and then fashion a cover from plastic or canvas.

Teamster Melvin Huyard of Johnson County, Tenn., a self-described "nostalgia buff," has built a perfect three-quarter-size replica of the most famous type of covered wagon, the Conestoga. Conestogas, named for their Pennsylvania manufacturer, were distinctively shaped with dished sides and projecting ends; they looked quite unlike most other wagons, which had square-cornered, rectangular beds.

The Mack trucks of the 19th century, Conestogas saw heavy use throughout the United States. Attesting to their presence in the Southern Appalachians is a Conestoga-style wagon on display at the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services' Carroll Reece Museum at East Tennessee State University. That particular Conestoga moved an Appalachian family from the Shenandoah Valley to Upper East Tennessee in the 19th century. From the 19th to the early 20th century, the Nissen wagon company of Salem (now Winston-Salem), N.C., manufactured a line of small, Conestoga-shaped wagons. Today, North Carolina teamsters and wagon collectors prize these "mini-Conestogas."

Television Westerns such as *Gunsmoke* and *Wagon Train* helped give Southerners the idea of holding wagon trains.

Riders, Mules, and Horses

When it comes to the team pulling the wagon, regional variation is noticeable on modern Southern wagon trains. In the Piedmont and the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina and Virginia, mules are favorites with 1990s teamsters. For example, Russell Mantz of Radford, Va., drives a team of blond mules produced out of a Belgian draft horse mare and a mammoth jack, or male, donkey. In fact, mules have become downright fashionable in some equestrian circles, and annual festivals such as the Benson, N.C., Mule Days draw thousands of the flop-eared beast's fans.

In the mountains of Northeast Tennessee, draft horses prevail, as exemplified by the huge, dappled gray Percherons driven by John Reed of Carter County, Tenn. According to Johnson County wagon trainer Harry Marlow, however, work horse usage in Upper East Tennessee has changed over the years. Before World War II, when people in the area farmed with teams, not everyone could afford the luxury of big draft animals. Obliged to work with what they could get, they sometimes pulled farm equipment with small, lightweight horses usually trained for riding. Today, however, few wagon trainers pull with light horses.

Although wagons provide the most colorful aspect of modern wagon trains and give the activity its name, riders are also numerous. As with draft animals, riders' mounts show regional variation. Mountain riders, following a tradition that extends back at least as far as Davy Crockett, have long favored racking horses and Tennessee Walkers for the trail. Aficionados of these so-called gaited horses laud the superior comfort of those breeds' smooth, quick walk to the bounciness of the trot, the corresponding gait of the quarter horses which non-mountain Southern wagon train riders often prefer. Predictably, on those mountain wagon trains frequented by lowlanders, saddle mules are, like draft mules, increasing in number.

Theresa Lloyd

Jesse Newman prefers mules for pulling his wagon.

Whatever the mount that riders prefer, almost all of them use western saddles — that is, saddles with a horn in front and a high back or cantle. Western saddles are actually a fairly recent introduction into the South, where historically people rode English — that is, on saddles with no horn and a low cantle. Interestingly, when I asked older mountain wagon trainers about the riding styles of their youth, I discovered that many farm families in early 20th century Southern Appalachia were unable to afford designated saddle horses or saddles. When someone did ride — taking work horses out to the field, for example — he or she rode bareback out of necessity.

A Roughneck Reputation

You can't discuss wagon trains without noting that some people view the activity as distinctly less than decorous. As the wife of one wagon master puts it, "I was brought up Southern Baptist, and we didn't drink, dance, or wagon train." Drinking and dancing do seem to occupy a prominent place on many wagon trains, and where there's late-night drinking and dancing, you'll probably find a little fighting, too. In this respect, wagon trains are, as several participants have told me, somewhat like Mardi Gras. They're carnivals, places to let your hair down.

Some wagon trainers bridle at this roughneck reputation. Carolyn Kinney, a veteran of the 1976 bicentennial wagon train, recounts an experience on the now-defunct North Wilkesboro-to-Boone, N.C., ride. Buying supplies in a store, Kinney overheard the storekeeper criticize wagon trainers' drinking habits. Angry and offended, she marched up to the woman and declared, "I'm on this wagon train, and I'm not drunk!"

Other wagon trainers make light of the rowdiness. Clyde Bowman Sr. chuckles when he reminisces about lying back in his wagon at night and listening to "the drunks squall."

Some wagon masters, such as Reece Kyte of Butler, Tenn., try to nip the problem in the bud by declaring their wagon trains nondrinking.

Odell and Vickie Collins, who met on one wagon train and were married on the dance floor of another, now bring their young son, "Cowboy" Collins.

A more serious charge sometimes leveled against wagon trains involves animal abuse. Teamster Russell Mantz is critical of riders who fail to feed and water their horses sufficiently. John Reed notes that by trotting rather than walking their teams downhill, some drivers fail to provide the breather that hard-working draft animals deserve.

As equestrian sports go, however, wagon training has fewer cases of abuse lodged against it than do certain others. The Tennessee Walking Horse show circuit, for example, is notorious for subjecting horses to painful practices such as "soring" the legs with caustic chemicals and weighting the shoes to achieve an unnaturally high step in the ring. Moreover, good wagon trainers, like all thoughtful horse persons, put their animals' comfort ahead of their own. In my observation, many teamsters seem especially attuned to the needs of their silently toiling equine partners.

In the Blood

Despite these controversies, wagon trains fall into the category of family entertainment, and it's not uncommon to find large extended families on a ride. Jesse Newman and Levi Smith have children and grandchildren actively engaged in wagon training. Odell and Vickie Collins, who met on one wagon train and were married on the dance floor of another, now bring their young son, "Cowboy" Collins. Carolyn and Cecil Kinney round up children, in-laws, and grandchildren for wagon trains. Roger Harmon, a former wagon master of the Dugspur, Va., ride, observes that even if children fall away from wagon training at some point, most likely they'll return. Again, it's the idea that wagon training gets into your blood.

Wagon trains serve as an intermediary between past and future in the Upper South. On the one hand, they enable participants to reconnect with their community's agricultural past. On the other, they provide a means of transmitting traditional skills to future generations. Above all, as one wagon trainer after another insists, these excursions are just plain fun. N&T

A folklorist and assistant professor of English at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tenn., Theresa Lloyd has ridden since she was a teenager and owns a Lambert Morgan horse.

I Mourn Friends Buried, Dead

Mountain roads meander — not the ones
that are shaved into asphalt banks
and hairpins by the blast of dynamite —
but those worn by wheel ruts and stream
crossings, seasonal rains, and toads
mating. There is a harmony in the riprap
of creek rock, and the wildflowers
and berries do not pass the eye
by in the hurry of tires racing over
interstate. It's true that their vistas do not
open into miles of valleys below
as you descend in air-conditioned grace.
Highways have no dead ends unless
in the fog you rear end an eighteen-
wheeler or cross the lanes dead-asleep,
oblivious to the beauty of God's country.
The backroad moments that I've stopped
for a bounding deer or to pick berries
is time well spent. Views of one-horse
farms and weathered cabins may be
a matter of acres, but the smell of smoke,
manure, and flowers filters through
rolled-down windows. Sometimes, tires
stick in a rut, backing up for another
vehicle occurs every now and then, and it's
true the "no trespassing" signs
of summer Floridians are a sin, but all this
is forgiven. As old roads are widened
and paved, I mourn friends buried, dead.

— John Cantey Knight

In 1996, New Delta Review awarded John Cantey Knight their Eyster Prize for poetry. Knight has also been the recipient of three Amelia Magazine *poetry awards (for one-line poems). This year, Knight's mountain poems have appeared in* Limestone, Cold Mountain Review, *and* Pikeville Review.

The Road
by John Ehle
University of Tennessee Press
Knoxville, Tenn. - 1998
$19.95 (paper)

My husband, who works for the North Carolina Department of Transportation, picked up John Ehle's novel *The Road* one evening after I had put it down. "This is good," he told me the next day after reading late into the night. "I think Ehle might be a better writer than Thomas Wolfe."

If you are curious about the coming of the railroad to the isolated Western North Carolina mountains in the 1870s, you should find Ehle's novel fascinating—whether you agree with my husband's assessment or not. Ehle recreates, with consummate skill, the arduous task of laying crossties from Morganton, N.C., to Swannanoa Gap on McDowell County's Sow Mountain, "a massive monolith of earth, rock, vegetation, and water, an elaborate series of ridges which built on one another to the top."

In this novel, originally published in 1967, Ehle is particularly successful in making the hardships the original road crew must have encountered come alive. Weatherby Wright—the president, superintendent and chief engineer of the Western North Carolina Railroad Company—has to rely primarily on convict labor as he battles seemingly bottomless mud, watches the body counts from caveins mount, and endures a devastating outbreak of pneumonia. A mountain man determined to deliver his people from poverty and isolation, Wright encounters resistance from his workers, from the state, and from those very same mountain people he wants to save. Ultimately, though, the hardest test is his moral dilemma over the terrible human cost of the enterprise. In an understatement, Weatherby notes that "it takes a strong man's stomach to build a road."

Indeed, although the mountaineers do need the Road, the author shows the double-edged nature of progress. The engine that belches "fire and smoke" costs cattle and wildlife their lives. The road that provides job opportunities, food, and medicine also brings noise, destruction of beauty, and a way of life so altered that going back is impossible. Wright, who repeatedly personifies the mountain as a vengeful old woman, wonders if she is in pain when his crew blasts and digs.

In one of my favorite scenes, the ne'er-do-well Rev. Plover illustrates the dark side of progress by way of a Christmas production he stages for the railroad crew. At the end of a re-enactment of the life of Christ, Plover illuminates by fire the corpses of three men hung on crosses fashioned out of bridge timbers and ties, men who had actually been killed while building the Road. The audience is thrown into confusion and terror by his play's stark conclusion. But the preacher insists, "I had to put that crucifixion in there." He points out that the crucifixion actually took place on a road, the road to Galilee. "The crucifixion is the message," he declares. "That's the secret of it, that's where the Old and the New Testament come together, in the final justice, God sacrificing the best of all for the worst of us, and that's where the Road and the Cross converge ... And it's the cross we're moving toward on this Road, not the manger."

Ehle is not any more sentimental about his Appalachian characters than he is about the coming of the railroad. You'll meet the cunning 18-year-old mountain girl, HenryAnna, and the widow Nettie, who refuses to marry the railroad engineer Red Tuttle, though she lets him wear her former husband's pants. You'll find a variety of mountain men: cowardly, brave, tough, lazy, foolish, and wise. Their unclichéd dialogue often sparkles. And though the author clearly sympathizes with the convicts, he doesn't deny their acts of violence or their meanness.

Still, characterization is the novel's one weakness. In the first place, the story is populated by so many characters that at the outset, I found it difficult to care about any one of them in particular. And Ehle's treatment of his numerous characters often left me wanting to know more. For instance, I wanted to know Moses better—the powerfully built convict who leads no one to the Promised Land. Even Wright, in the beginning, seems shadowy. Occasionally, the characters' actions seemed implausible. Ehle's depiction of the evolving relationship between the railroad company treasurer Hal Cumberland and the young HenryAnna, for example, lacked credibility: I could not quite understand how Cumberland and HenryAnna could move from his attempted rape of her and her subsequent reprisal to a love affair.

For me, the first half of the book, in which all of these characters are introduced, moves slowly. But after the gripping scene during which Weatherby contemplates his own mortality as he lays injured in a cave at the bottom of a 10-foot ravine, the story gathers momentum, drama, and strength. Weatherby finally emerges as a complex and complicated man. It is in the novel's second half, then, that *The Road* becomes the engrossing historical novel that had my husband up reading until the small hours of the morning.

—Maggie McKinney

Maggie McKinney teaches Spanish and English at various schools in Mitchell County, N.C.

Changing Plans for America's Inner Cities: Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine and 20th Century Urbanism
by Zane L. Miller and Bruce Tucker
Ohio State University Press
Columbus, Ohio - 1998
$22.75 (paper)

Over-the-Rhine is one of Cincinnati's oldest neighborhoods, sheltering first German immigrants, then urban Appalachians, and currently African Americans. With a reputation for fierce political battles, it is also one of the city's feistiest neighborhoods.

Even as the area's population dwindles, having fallen from 30,000 in the 1950s to below 10,000 in the 1990 census, Over-

the-Rhine remains a powerful symbol in the minds of many observers. To some, the neighborhood, which is just north of the city's central business district, is the essence of urban life gone awry — poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, homelessness, disease, and crime — along with the hopelessness and rage these social ills engender. For others, it is a crucible for community building and democratic self-determination, a haven for the poor that is well-suited for low-income housing and the delivery of social services. For still others, it is Music Hall, Main Street bistros and galleries, the School for Creative and Performing Arts, and one of the country's finest expressions of Italianate architecture. For its residents, the neighborhood is simply home.

Depending on your point of view, then, Over-the-Rhine is either a planner's paradise or worst nightmare. Historians Miller and Tucker sort out the turmoil of Over-the-Rhine's legacy in *Changing Plans for America's Inner Cities.* Readers should look beyond the academic provenance or writing style: In one instance, three long sentences ramble across half a page. Still, in just 168 pages, these two careful researchers outline the various planning strategies and public policies that are essential to understanding the neighborhood. In doing so, Miller and Tucker have fashioned a template for examining similar neighborhoods across the nation.

The initial chapters take us from the 1920s through the early 1950s, a period during which planners and policy makers saw "slums" like Over-the-Rhine as infectious blights on the city and targeted them for demolition. They devised ambitious schemes for the low-density redevelopment of these areas, paying particular attention to maintaining the racial and class groupings already established in the city. Over-the-Rhine escaped "slum clearance" during this era only because other projects, principally in Cincinnati's West End, took precedence.

By the late 1950s, both philosophical and practical considerations changed the neighborhood's projected fate from demolition to conservation and rehabilitation. Rather than seeing the residents as passive beneficiaries, planners now viewed them as being in control of their neighborhoods, responsible for "designing their physical and social fabrics." Moreover, the city now considered Over-the-Rhine's housing stock a valuable adjunct to the central business district. Again, Cincinnati postponed development in Over-the-Rhine while the city focused on the revitalization of its central business district.

Miller and Tucker devote a chapter to Appalachian organizing, which took place in Over-the-Rhine from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s. In doing so, they mistakenly infer that Appalachian organizers intended to make Over-the-Rhine a segregated white enclave. In fact, most Appalachian programs in the neighborhood were integrated, and many of the Appalachian residents were also African American, so they identified both with their African roots and their Appalachian heritage. Nevertheless, despite the prevailing support for local self-determination in both city hall and the federal government, a Model Cities plan was devised that, in Miller and Tucker's words, "sought to place control of Over-the-Rhine securely in the hands of its poor and increasingly black population."

The city's Department of Urban Development gave University of Cincinnati city planning professor Harris Forusz the task of developing an urban design plan for Over-the-Rhine. In 1975, Forusz submitted a detailed, 350-page document outlining a complicated and expensive plan estimated to cost $3 billion that gave residents strong controls over the development of their neighborhood. This complex plan failed to meet the approval of the local Model Cities director who never forwarded it to Cincinnati's planning commission or city council. From that point on, the neighborhood became contested terrain.

A city-backed movement to make Over-the-Rhine into a chic area with a racially and socially diverse population filled the vacuum created by the failure of the Model Cities plan. Cincinnati's principal strategy was to support civic organizations interested in historic preservation. Throughout the 1980s, community groups in Over-the-Rhine waged a vigorous battle against zoning their community as a historic conservation district. They opposed its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as well. Branded as "separatists" because of their antipathy to "homogenizing" the neighborhood by mixing various classes and races, neighborhood leaders and organizers won these battles. They were also successful in devising their own plan for development in Over-the-Rhine, one that had a strong emphasis on low-income housing. With some compromises, this plan was accepted by the planning commission and approved by city council.

Changing Plans for America's Inner Cities ends with the suggestion that bottom-up planning, while highly democratic, can often be too narrowly focused on the issues of a particular neighborhood. In the authors' view, planning must be done with the whole city's welfare in mind rather than on a piecemeal, neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis. This assumption gives rise to the authors' interpretative framework, which pits "cultural separatists" working at the neighborhood level against those who seek the good of the entire metropolis.

Given this perspective, it is not surprising that little attention is paid to the residents' legitimate fear of the displacement that so often occurs when low-income areas are "revitalized." What is surprising, however, is that the book entertains no alternative analysis: for instance, drawing on political scientist Anthony Downs' idea of "gilding the ghetto" by investing in it instead of dispersing it or sociologist Herbert Gans' notion of a neighborhood as an urban village where people unsettled by migration or poverty can safely regroup.

Somewhere between Forusz's step-by-step prescription for a $3 billion planning scheme in Over-the-Rhine and Miller and Tucker's sweeping generalizations about the good of the whole, there has to be an

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Books and Music Worth Mentioning

A Guide to Literary Sites of the South by Ella Robinson (Northport, Ala.: Vision Press, 1998; $17.95 paper). A guidebook for readers on car trips across 13 Southern states. Ella Robinson describes the house/museums of 26 writers, including Robert Penn Warren of Kentucky; Carl Sandburg and Thomas Wolfe of North Carolina; Pearl Buck of West Virginia; Alex Haley of Tennessee; John Fox Jr., Edgar Allan Poe, and Booker T. Washington, all of Virginia; and Joel Chandler Harris of Georgia. She also offers profiles of Jesse Stuart, James Still, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, James Agee, and others, noting relevant archives, gravesites, and literary festivals. Helpful appendices provide phone numbers and addresses for planning literary field trips.

Crossroads: Southern Routes, Music of the American South produced by the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1996; $16.98 CD). Sixteen tracks of traditional Southern music range from folk to soul, from blues to bluegrass, and from Vera Ward Hall's spiritual "Travelin' Shoes" to Doc Watson's "Southbound."

Parkway Byways by James R. Hinkel (Boone, N.C.: Parkway Publishers, 1998; $18.95 paper). *Parkway Byways* is an oversized guidebook focusing on scenic highways, historical sites, natural attractions, and towns worth visiting in the mountains of Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. Organized along 19 routes that connect to the Blue Ridge Parkway, it's a comprehensive car-travel guide with mileage figures and brief histories, sprinkled with opinions about what to expect. The writer made an error about my hometown — Valdese, N.C.: Its natives arrived from the *Cottian (*not the Croatian) Alps, but wherever he used "spectacular" and "charming" to describe places I knew, I tended to agree.

Roscoe Holcomb: The High Lonesome Sound compiled, produced, and annotated by John Cohen (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1998; $16.98 CD). Twenty-one traditional songs are performed by an East Kentuckian who influenced the 1960s folk music revival. His a cappella "The Wandering Boy" from an old Baptist songbook and his bluesy vocals and guitar in "Boat's Up the River" remind us what it's like to feel adrift.

See Rock City: A Story Journey Through Appalachia by Donald Davis (Little Rock, Ark.: August House Publishers, 1996; $12.95 paper). Well-known storyteller Donald Davis has penned a Western North Carolina memoir that begins in Sulpher Springs, N.C., in 1948 and ends in 1962. The title comes from a car game that Davis played as a child: The first one to point out a "See Rock City" sign won a rest stop and a "Co-cola" for everybody in the car. The author concludes, "When you discover that the place you really want to be is home, why pay to go somewhere else?"

The Hillbilly Highway by Michael Barrick (Granite Falls, N.C.: Defiantly Rural Publishing, 1997; $15.95 paper). Newspaper writer and editor Michael Barrick has assembled a collection of brief, entertaining essays based on interviews he has conducted, mostly for the *Lenoir (N.C.) News-Topic.* The collection introduces us to mountain people who live along the region's back roads: a number of bluegrass musicians, from Doc Watson and the Freight Hoppers to middle school teachers and students; Virginian Boyd Carr, cartoonist for the *Appalachian Journal;* as well as Caldwell County, N.C., natives and Barrick's own family members.

The Land of Saddle-Bags: A Study of the Mountain People of Appalachia by James Watt Raine (With a foreword by Dwight Billings; Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1924; reprint 1997; $19.95 paper). A lively, firsthand account of a Berea College professor's favorable experiences with mountain people. Originally published in 1924, this documentary was written by the head of Berea College's English department from 1906 until 1939. He held the view that transportation was the key to growth and change: "All sociological progress is the result primarily of passable roads. . . .Whenever a river is made navigable or a railway is built, the adjacent area gradually emerges from the Land of Saddle-Bags." In a class with the early documentary studies of John C. Campbell and Horace Kephart, Raine's book is "far and away the best 'read' " of the three, according to sociologist Dwight Billings.

Towboat on the Ohio by James E. Casto (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1995; $22.95 hardcover). A newspaper journalist and associate editor of the Huntington *Herald-Dispatch*, James Casto traveled eight days on the Ohio River — from Huntington, W.Va., to Pittsburgh, up the Allegheny and the Monongahela, then back to Huntington. Along the way, he recorded stories of those he met as well as the history of commerce and the growth of communities on the river. He's no Mark Twain, but still, he's collected some engaging stories about a river that employs an amazing number and impressive variety of individuals.

— Sandra L. Ballard

An associate professor of English at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., Sandy Ballard is Now & Then's *reviews editor.*

Reviews

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effective planning process for this inner-city neighborhood. Fortunately, the residents of Over-the-Rhine were able to devise a middle way between these two academic analyses and to implement such a process themselves.

The tensions between gentrification and ghettoization are still strong in Over-the-Rhine. Currently, a plan to construct a new baseball stadium on the eastern edge of the neighborhood is a hotly contested issue that has city hall seeking a new master plan for Over-the-Rhine. The process for devising such a plan may provide the basis for another important book. Meanwhile, Miller and Tucker have written an excellent history of planning in a low-income neighborhood that is well worth the read.

—Phillip J. Obermiller

Phil Obermiller is a member of Cincinnati's Urban Appalachian Council.

A Skiff of Snow
by Ralph Coleman
The Sow's Ear Press
Abingdon, Va. - 1997
$6.00 (paper)

The poems in Ralph S. Coleman's chapbook, *A Skiff of Snow,* seem simple and straightforward—and they are. But it would be a mistake for that reason to discount their power to affect a reader. At his best, Coleman is a poet of plain talk, of swiftly observed detail and images that resonate and draw a reader back into the poems for a second and third reading.

Coleman writes from Wythe County, Va., and one of the things that makes his poems so alive is a sense of place, made real not so much by descriptions of topography as by Coleman's believable telling of what it feels like to stand in that country of farms and small factories, wide pastures and rolling hills, open country just beginning to be mountainous. Though these poems look inward more often than outward, they still come to us in a voice that is human with local shadings. As writer Flannery O'Connor wished her work to be, these are the poems of "somebody *from* somewhere."

For example, there is the poem, "To Price's Store," presented as one long quote. The poem offers the sort of confusing directions a traveler might receive on a rural road, instructions keyed to landmarks such as "Myrtle Wright's curve," "Old Man Huddle's silos," and "Luther Arnold's horse/farm." Anyone who has ever been perplexed at receiving that kind of directions in the backcountry, any backcountry, will realize that this is a wryly funny poem. But "To Price's Store" also clearly announces that the importance of landscape is in the lives that are lived there—an importance perhaps unavailable to the bewildered tourist.

Throughout *A Skiff of Snow,* there are poems that rehearse the loss of innocence and hold out a possibility—explicit or implied—that at least partial compensation is available through the power of the mind to order and transform experience through the making of poems and similar activities that bring order and perhaps beauty into the world. In "The Old Pine Tree," for instance, the speaker sets out "a pot/of forget-me-nots/on the bleeding stump" of a tree that had been treasured as a child's "hide-out" before it was cut down for firewood.

One of the strongest poems in the book is "And I Couldn't," which recounts the speaker's childhood memory of being unable to read aloud in class. The speaker recalls a teacher "older than the school/ and wrinkled like dead worms/[who] stopped me when I stammered." Repeated failures to read a passage aloud bring laughter from the other children. This ridicule drives the speaker inward, seeking another kind of language that offers at least symbolic power over the situation and over the hated and powerful adult:

> Thirty vexing spirits,
> snakes of my own size,
> giggled and hissed
> and bit my tongue and heart
> till I could never speak again.
> I prayed the witch
> would choke on a word
> and die.

Prayer, like poetry, is a form of internal speech where the speaker does not stammer. It is a re-ordering through personal language as opposed to the public language of the classroom that has occasioned the speaker's failure.

In the poem "Windowpane," "Broomsage in the forsaken pasture/waves in the breeze, summoning me/to walk through it to another time." When the speaker answers the call, he finds a fallen-in farmhouse where only the stone fireplace still stands. Looking around, he notes that "on a ridge rests a tractor/once John Deere green, now rusty/like a swollen stream."

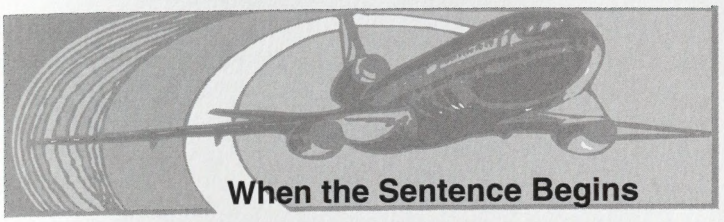
Here is one of Coleman's images that lingers long in the mind. Not only does the fate of the tractor covered in rust close the poem with an echo of the "forsaken pasture" covered in broomsage, but the tractor is also "like a swollen stream" because it has rusted in the turbulent roil of time, which is what we can see by looking past the tractor to the people who once lived on the farm—or perhaps through it, like the windowpane of the poem's title.

Though "Windowpane" holds out no hope of returning the abandoned farm to life, it implies that something can be salvaged by the act of making poetry from the loss. This reading is strengthened when the poem is placed in the context of others, such as "And I Couldn't" and "The Old Pine Tree."

Several other poems play inventive variations on the theme, and they form the backbone of *A Skiff of Snow,* tying the poems together into a book rather than a group of unrelated poems gathered for the purpose of going between covers. And if these unpretentious poems pull the reader back for further readings, they become richer with each trip through them.

—James Owens

The first prize winner of Now & Then's *1998 Appalachian Poetry Competition, James Owens is a newspaper copy editor living in St. Paul, Va. This fall, The Sow's Ear Press published his first collection of poetry,* Loan of the Quick.



When the Sentence Begins

I am innocent, legs spread-eagled on white chenille. Winter's at fault, and the overgrown lawn, and the sky, that rind whose fruit the blackbirds have eaten. But the sentence goes on and on,

propelling me onto the inkjet road. On each side are the killing fields, where life's riddles, my woes take off their sheepish clothing, bare fangs stained with dried blood. When I pause and hold out

my hand, it's shaken by a claw, when I lift my face for a kiss, a bulb splinters my jaw. But everything I've left behind continues to walk in my shoes, so I go on with the sentence, praying for a plane

to make me a white pencil in the sky, for a train I can hop, with boxcars that flow like a river, tootling and whistling with every wave of the engineer's hand. But they never arrive. Only Belief shadows

me like a ghost, and in the nightwatches, stars rattle the snakeskins I keep as amulets against the dark. I am left to make my own way— one footstep at a time is enough to leave a light imprint in the dust.

At the end of the sentence, I look back and see every vowel anchored in the diary of desire, its weighty tomes, each consonant colored by the oil of despair, its cloud of gloom. I see the crimes

of the tongue, all the times I vanquished silence when it should have won. I cling to the black period until it wheels me back home, where trucks converge like spokes about my newly shorn lawn.

Roaring like the M-G-M lion, the fruits of the heart tumble out, ripened by travel. Their pink spread announces spring is here, so I sketch the world, my dark lips on the page made whiter by my efforts.

—Llewellyn McKernan

Llewellyn McKernan is a recipient of a 1998 Literary Fellowship funded by the West Virginia Commission on the Arts. Her poems have been published in Appalachian Journal, Appalachian Heritage, Southern Poetry Review, The Kenyon Review, Antietam Review, Kestrel, *and others.*

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Planes, Trains, and Automobiles in Appalachia

One of O. Winston Link's best known photographs, "Hotshot Eastbound," was made in August of 1956 in the tiny town of Iaeger, W.Va. The movie playing at the drive-in that night was *Battle Taxi*, a Korean War film. See "Night Trains Are Forever" by Edward J. Myers on page 13.

O.Winston Link

NOW & THEN
THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

Center for Appalachian Studies and Services
East Tennessee State University
Box 70556
Johnson City, TN 37614-0556

Forwarding and address correction requested

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Johnson City, TN 37601
Permit No. 194

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